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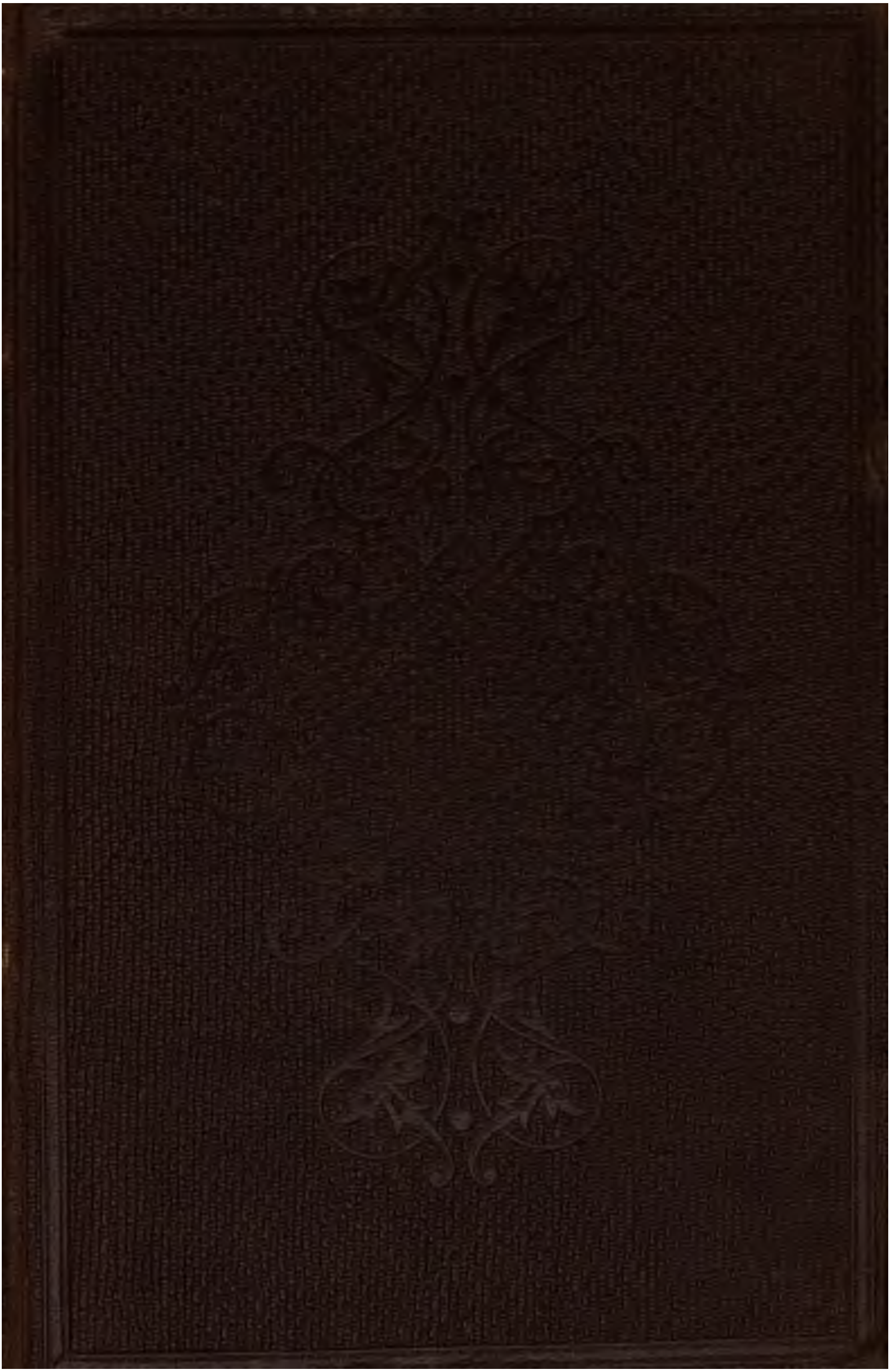

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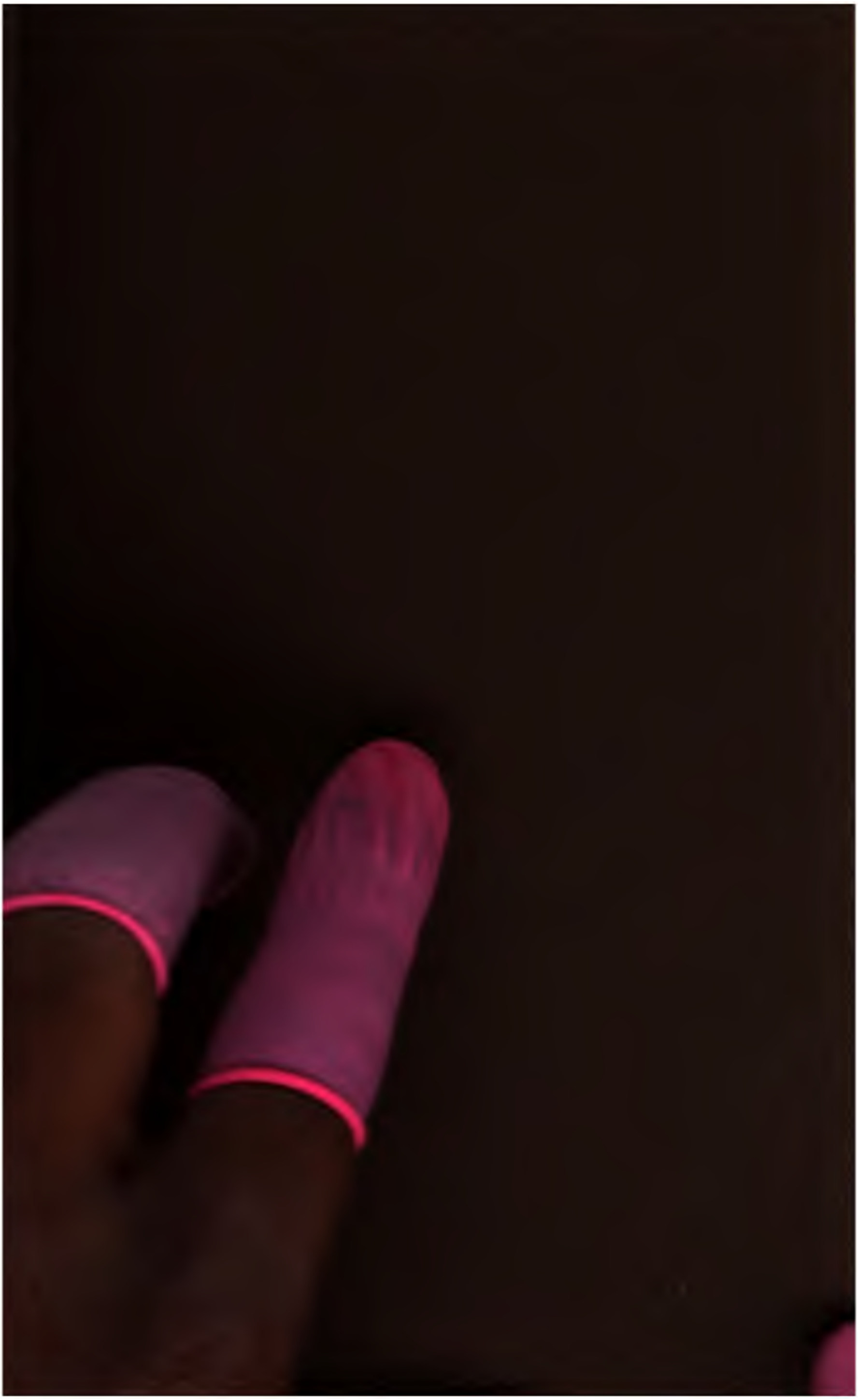

MEMOIRS OF THE REV. JOHN PYER.

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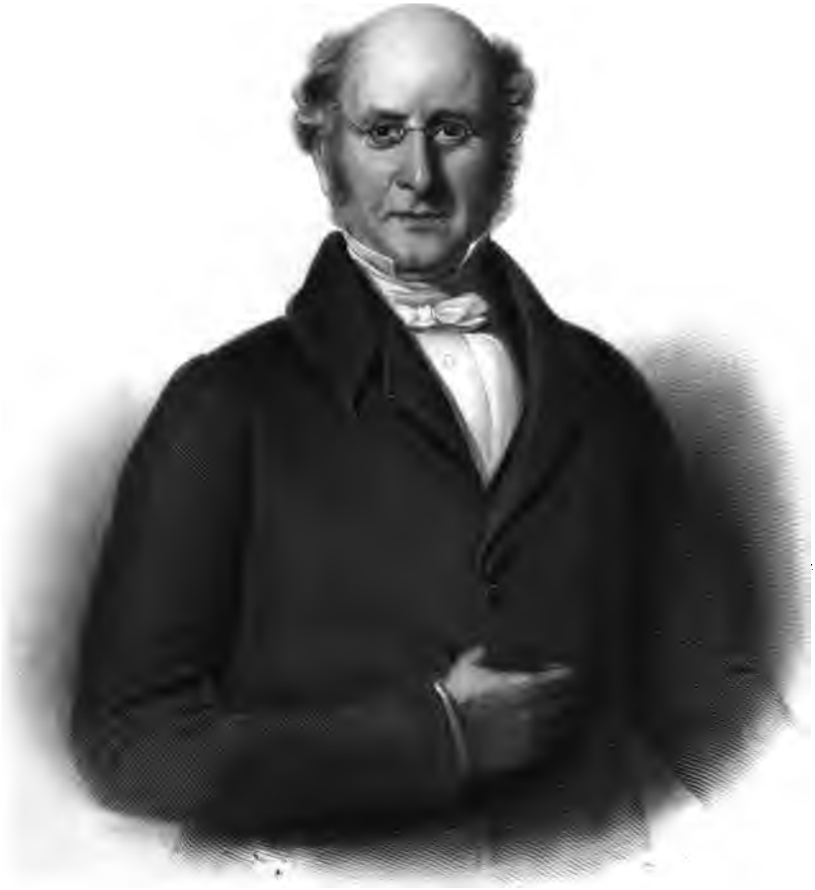

REV^{D} JOHN FYER.

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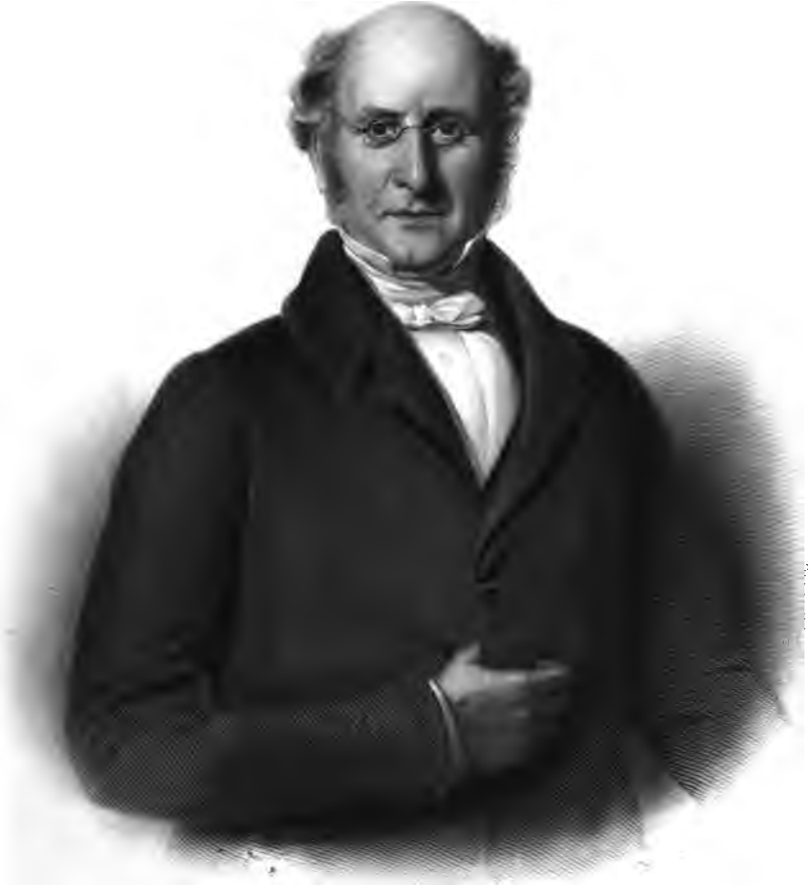

REVD JOHN PYER.

[illegible] Engraved by J. Cochran

MEMOIRS

OF

THE REV. JOHN PYER.

BY K. P. RUSSELL.

"Heaven doth with us as we with torches do
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues." * * * *

SHAKESPEARE.

"It is the best sign of a great nature, that it opens a foreground, and, like the breath of morning landscapes, invites us onward."—EMERSON.

LONDON:
JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1865.

210. f. 30.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA ·

PREFACE.

A REASONABLE delay, after the departure of a good man, is generally desirable, often necessary, to collect materials and to prepare a record of his life and labours. A really substantial narrative need not be precipitated, seeing it contemplates the benefit of the generation to come, as well as that which is now living. It is believed that, in this respect, the proper course has been pursued relative to the late Rev. JOHN PYER. The volume has been at length completed, and it is now most respectfully presented to his friends, of whom, while many sleep, a large number still survive, who will review with pleasure times and scenes long since gone by, in which he and they took sweet counsel together, and laboured zealously for the cause of religious liberty and humanity. They will feel satisfaction in renewing their acquaintance with one who had a heart eminently fitted for friendship, and who, on departing this life, left behind him no enemy. Few of Mr. PYER's contemporaries, of his own class and order, were more generally respected and esteemed; and where best known, he was most loved.

It has often been remarked, that the life of the Christian minister is necessarily retired, and consequently devoid of the incident and the interest which attach to the memoirs of men of business. As a rule, this undoubtedly, holds good; but there are many exceptions, and amongst these a conspicuous place was due to Mr. PYER. Few men had ever less of the monastic in spirit and temperament; he was essentially a man of action, and, in the best sense of the term, a man of the world. He would have excelled in any of the higher walks of public life, for he was richly endowed with those gifts which are necessary to success. He had seen much of mankind in a variety of aspects. From his memoirs it is manifest that he had ample opportunities of examining Irish nature in its peculiar phases, and his conversation showed with what success he had conducted his inquiries. He was thoroughly conversant with the English masses in the manufacturing and commercial districts. Life in the Metropolis, too, he carefully studied, and well understood. His lengthened residence in Devonport also familiarized him with the state of society, and the occupations peculiar to that most important locality. The British people were to him a library, which he had thoroughly studied for a long course of years, and its advantages were strikingly apparent on many occasions.

Mr. PYER was, in other and divers respects, a model citizen. He was deeply alive to everything that concerned the welfare of society. He felt that he belonged to both worlds, and that it behoved him to attend to the duties that he might enjoy the privileges of both, and leave them as a legacy to his children and posterity. Religion, however, was with him always the primary object; missions—city, home, and foreign—had a very powerful hold on his judgment and affections, and he was ever ready, to the utmost of his power, to promote their interests. He looked to the Gospel as the only means of curing the maladies of society, and mitigating the sorrows of mankind. But while religion was paramount in his thoughts and affections, he set light by nothing connected with liberty and good government.

In all questions, economic and political, he took the deepest interest. He highly estimated all means calculated to promote purity of election, and a patriotic representation of the people. He was, nevertheless, moderate in all his views, and he made due allowance for the slow march of social improvement in matters affecting the constitution. He perceived and judged aright of the difficulties which stood in the way of advancement, trusting to time and labour, in subordination to the working of Divine Providence, to remove them.

While Mr. PYER was, on full conviction, an Independent, he was yet a man of a most Catholic spirit, ever ready to mingle and work with all who held the truth in righteousness. His views of the verities of the Gospel were thoroughly Scriptural, and his personal religion was of a very healthy character. Few men had ever in their temperament less of superstition, or of blind enthusiasm. Good sense and sound reason, enlightened by Scripture, reigned everywhere paramount. In all respects his intellect was finely balanced, and his moral nature was in full harmony with his intellect.

Such was the subject of the present volume, which it is believed will occupy a respectable place in the religious biography of the century, and contribute, in some humble measure, to instruct and to edify the Church of Christ.

Although the pleasing task is now completed, the pen is dropped with reluctance. The materials of the book have occupied the mind of the Writer so long, so earnestly, and so devoutly, that it recoils from the final surrender of the precious treasure to the general public. Mr. PYER, as a Correspondent, had few equals. His style was full of grace and beauty, as well as marked by clearness and force; and in everything there was a gentle animation which imparted to his epistles a peculiar charm. For a long period the Writer has, in his letters and papers, in the calm of solitude, enjoyed the most delightful communion with the dear departed; but that communion is now at an end, till the time shall come when mind shall mingle with mind without the necessity of a medium. It is meanwhile a matter of pure and profound satisfaction to the Writer to have been enabled to rear to his memory this humble monument, with materials of his own creation, which will survive mural tablets, and everything composed of perishing material.

This volume is to be considered as a Family Biography; and to the kind friends of Mr. PYER, who in various ways have so generously promoted the undertaking, the Writer's thanks are most gratefully tendered, as also to those of his ministerial brethren who have so largely contributed to its completeness by their judicious counsels.

The work is now humbly committed to the gracious benediction of the Master whom its subject so fervently loved and so zealously served.

LONDON, *March* 4, 1865.

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MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN PYER.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY DAYS.

"——A noble boy,
A brave, free-hearted, careless one.
* * * * * *
'Tis strange how thought upon a child
Will, like a presence, sometimes press;
And when his pulse is beating wild,
And life itself is in excess.
* * * * * *
How in his heart will spring
A feeling, whose mysterious thrall
Is stronger, sweeter far than all;
And on its silent wing,
How with the clouds he'll float away,
As wandering and as lost as they." WILLIS.

SECTION I.

THE subject of our annals was of Welsh extraction on his father's side, and descended from a wealthy family in Pembrokeshire, that once inherited a valuable estate in that county known by the name of the "Golden Grove." The ancestral name was originally spelt *Poyer*, but from some cause not clearly known, the *o* was dropped by the writer's great-grandfather. In English history, a Colonel

Poyer, noted unhappily for his dissipated habits, played no inconsiderable part in the Civil Wars. His stout resistance to Cromwell, and persistent hold of Pembroke Castle, are referred to in "Carlyle's Elucidations." This man was undoubtedly a family progenitor, though we have no means of tracing the lineal descent.

Of his mother's parentage information is furnished from a sketch of her life, written by Mr. Pyer, and published in the "Tent Methodist Magazine" for 1824. She was born in London in 1757. "Her parents (George and Elizabeth Richards) were descended from families of considerable opulence. Her maternal ancestors were well known and highly respected in the city of London, some of them having enjoyed, for many years, civic honours of the first distinction. Her father was engaged in a very extensive business as a hat-manufacturer in Cockspur Street, Haymarket, in connection with a Mr. Oliphant, a near relation of her mother's, some of whose descendants still carry on the trade. Both her parents were gay, fashionable characters; and had they both been spared, there is little doubt but their daughter would have been brought up in the same dissipated manner. It pleased the wise Disposer of events, however, by an unexpected interposition of his providence, to mark out for her a very different path through life. While yet an infant, her father died, after a few days' illness, while visiting some of his relations in Devonshire; and her mother retiring to Bristol, for some time gave way to the most violent and excessive grief.

This having at length subsided, she returned with greater eagerness than ever to the pursuit of worldly pleasures and amusements; while her daughter, after submitting for some time to many things which her conscience perpetually condemned, at length determined to leave her mother's abode, and, by patient industry, seek to make her way in the world." She was married in 1784, and was deprived of her husband quite suddenly—his death being occasioned by the rupture of a blood-vessel in the head. She had five children then living, of whom the subject of our sketch was the third, being at the time seven years of age.

Although her moral character was unimpeachable, and her observance of religious worship exemplary—both parents having been most conscientious in their attendance at Maryport Church, in the city of Bristol—yet, during his boyhood, she gave no decisive evidence of a change of heart. In her youth she was a frequent hearer of John Wesley, often rising at five o'clock in the morning, and standing amongst the crowd assembled on some waste ground, afterwards the site of Guinea Street Chapel (now known by the name of Wycliffe), to hear this celebrated preacher. In later years she looked back with wondering gratitude to the conversion of her son John, the first in the family, and the instrumental means of leading herself and three of her children to the cross of Christ. Her death, to which we shall have occasion to refer in subsequent pages, took place March 6, 1824.

Mr. Pyer's eldest and only surviving sister describes him, when a child, as remarkable for liveliness and activity, and for being at the same time of a thoughtful turn of mind. He would frequently run in from play to ask his mother about Samson and other prominent characters in Bible story. On wet Sundays, when prevented from going to public worship, he would gather his brothers and sisters together and preach to them, turning his pinafore for a surplice, and making a temporary pulpit of the chairs.

On one occasion he had the misfortune to lose his hymn-book at a time when money to procure another was not easily found. His grief was unmistakable, though subdued by the wish so characteristic of his future career, "Ah, well! I hope whoever finds it, it will be made a blessing to him."

His early educational advantages must have been very limited, and proved a source of regret to him in after life. But the native energy of his character rose above these privations, and to a considerable extent overcame them. While quite a youth, he was introduced to the Rev. J. Thorpe, and received much kindness and valuable help from that eloquent and distinguished preacher of the gospel, both in the loan of books and conversational instruction. In the family circle, he frequently adverted to this circumstance with grateful and affectionate remembrance. A young man who could rise between four and five o'clock in the morning to secure time for mental and spiritual improvement, before entering upon the business avocations of the day, could hardly fail of attaining his object. Copious extracts from standard works, and various notes and memoranda belonging to this period, evince the diligence and care with which he husbanded his stores of knowledge.

SECTION II.

Of this portion of his life we have an interesting narrative in his own handwriting, which precludes the necessity of gathering up traditionary fragments. It is as follows :—

"I was born in Bristol, December 3, 1790, of honest, industrious parents, who were regular hearers of the gospel in the Establishment and among the Methodists. My father died suddenly when I was about seven years of age, and my mother was greatly distressed for some months respecting the safety of his state, but one night felt particularly relieved by a dream, in which she supposed he appeared to her, and assured her of his having found mercy of the Lord. About this time the Lord was pleased to draw my heart out after Him. I felt peculiar delight in hearing his word among the Methodists, and had a confused idea that I should live to preach the gospel to the heathen. I had also a kind of conviction, when hearing the preaching in Guinea Street Chapel, that I should in that very pulpit minister the word of life. At this period I used to assemble my playmates, and, with great apparent devotion, would go through the whole of the church prayers, lessons, etc.; and feeling greatly pleased with the thought of being a minister, I purposed, when grown up, to convert a part of my mother's house into a chapel. On some of these occasions my mother and neighbours were present, and being fond of the Church forms, expressed their satisfaction. In addition to this, I manifested great attachment to books, spent all my pocket-money in their purchase, and in the purchase of paper to learn to write, felt great tenderness of conscience, and was always careful to abstain from the levity and unkindness of bad boys; insomuch, that on those several accounts I obtained among my playmates the appellation of 'Parson Pyer,' and was usually recognized by this name.

"In two or three years, however, I lost this sanctity; and becoming impatient of restraint, I went of my own accord to work at a glass manufactory, and resolved to learn the business, that I might be from under my mother's control. She reasoned with me on the impropriety of my conduct—entreated, threatened, but all to no purpose. I was bent on having my own will, and hence all her designs touching my future situation in life were frustrated. I soon contracted a fondness for my mean and degrading employment, and giving way to my passions and inclinations, fell into all manner of sin. Though but eleven years old, I was foremost among the boys in every species of wickedness, and was taken notice of by them, and the shocking wretches in the shape of men who worked there, as their champion in crime. In the midst of all, I felt great convictions, and never dared thus to sin in my mother's presence; and if at any time my wickedness reached her ears, I always denied it in the most positive way.

"When nearly thirteen years old, I became acquainted with some serious lads, and as I knew I was doing wrong, I was soon persuaded by them to give up my sinful course, and to be more serious. I did so, and on Christmas Day, 1803, joined the Methodist Society. I had very serious impressions, a great change took place in my behaviour, and I began to pray with considerable fervour; but yet there was much hypocrisy mixed with the whole. I now gave up my grosser sins, but would sometimes give way to trifling, and be found in improper company. Just at this time I experienced two remarkable preservations. Several giddy boys, who with myself were very venturesome, went to St. Vincent Rocks, below the Hotwells, and by way of bravado clambered up and down some of the most dangerous parts of the rock, where a single slip would have sent us into eternity. I have viewed these places since with peculiar sensations, and have never thought of my danger when thus engaged, without feeling my blood chilled in my veins. At another time a party of soldiers were escorting a number of impressed seamen through the city to Lamplighter's Hill, followed by a mob, which I joined. The mob abused the soldiers, and made repeated attempts to rescue the seamen. At length in the Hotwell Road the soldiers turned round and fired with ball upon the people. A boy was shot dead just by my side, and many others were dreadfully wounded. Some of them never recovered.

This last circumstance greatly impressed my mind.

"In 1804 and 1805, I was more clearly convinced of the nature and necessity of justifying faith. I saw my need of an interest in Christ, and was truly awakened and alive to my spiritual concerns. I now had clearer views of the Christian ministry, discovered the value of precious souls, felt peculiar pleasure in reading the biography of Methodist preachers, as found in the Methodist magazines, and comparing their early life with mine, especially their call to the ministry. I also felt great interest in missionary accounts and letters, had a burning desire to be employed in preaching the gospel in a foreign land, and an increasing persuasion that I should hereafter be thus employed. I now began to disrelish my employment, and to repent of my rash conduct which led me into it. I endeavoured to get out of it, and for a few months obtained a situation in a haberdasher's shop; but the person I was with failing in business, I was obliged to return to my former employment.

"In 1806, a glass-work was begun at Exeter, to which I went, and was here introduced to Mr. William Beal, now a travelling preacher, and Mr. Squance, now a missionary in Ceylon. We met in Band together, and to Squance my soul was truly united. I was guilty of some improprieties at Exeter; but, upon the whole, my convictions of sin, my discoveries of Christ in the gospel, and my views of the sacred ministry were confirmed and increased. Squance and myself visited the sick together, and began to hold meetings in two or three parts of the city, which were afterwards taken up by the local preachers, and much good was done. We each conversed freely about our sentiments touching the ministry, and I received from Messrs. Beal and Squance considerable encouragement and advice. About Christmas the work was stopped at Exeter, and I returned to Bristol. On this journey the Lord preserved me in a wonderful way. Some of us came in a post-chaise from Taunton to Bridgewater. A few miles from the latter place, a third portion at least of the circular part of one of the wheels came off, so that every time the wheel went round we were dreadfully shaken, and expected every moment to be dashed to pieces. In vain we desired the driver to stop, for he was so intoxicated as to be lost to all we could say, and in this dreadful plight we came the whole three miles into Bridgewater. Oh! how earnestly did I cry to the Lord for his mercy and grace, and how was my soul stirred up by the near prospect of death and eternity!

"During 1807 my discoveries of God and truth were greatly enlarged, and I appeared to come nearer and nearer to the enjoyment of Divine love. In May, 1808, I was brought to the gates of the grave by an inflammation of the lungs; but the Lord in mercy spared and raised me up again. In August, I left my employment at the glass-house, and joined myself to Mr. Thomas Harper, a grocer, and a respectable member of the Methodist Society. During the next two years, I joined the village society, and was frequently persuaded to give a word of exhortation. I now took to early rising, and was repeatedly engaged in reading the Scriptures, and otherwise improving my mind, for hours previous to going to the shop. My soul was every day engaged with God, and I felt a stronger persuasion than ever of my call to the work of preaching the gospel in a foreign clime. In August, 1809, some unpleasant circumstances occurred between me and Mr. Harper's children, on which account I left his employ. I now engaged to keep the books of Mr. Jones, an engineer, and continued with him till August, 1810. Here my opportunities for improvement were great. I had much time upon my hands, and was enabled to improve it to the honour and glory of God.

"In October, 1809, feeling uneasy respecting my call to the ministry, I opened my mind to my leader, who introduced me to Mr. Lomax. They both gave me encouragement, but thought I had better wait until the spring of the year, on account of my health. I now visited St. Peter's Hospital, held meetings in different wards, and was frequently called upon to give an exhortation to the people.

"On Sunday, March 10th, 1810, after much importunity, both from Mr. Pack and my leader, I accompanied the former to Hanham Green, the place of his appointment, and preached for him. He encouraged me much, and proposed my name for insertion on the Local Preachers' plan. I was admitted in September; but, alas! my soul greatly departed from God.

"In 1811, I met in Band with my dear friend

John Bennet, and was quickened again. We both formed the design of offering ourselves for the West Indies; but as my mother opposed me, and Messrs. Bradburn and Taylor wished me to travel in England, I thought perhaps it was providential, and so relinquished the idea. In November a letter came, requesting I might be sent to the help of the preachers in the Oxford circuit. Mr. Bradburn and Mr. Kelk heard me preach, examined me, in connection with Messrs. Treffrey and Martin, and sent me off. Now I thought my way was clear, and my mind was happy. I laboured with comfort and success; I passed the quarter and district meetings; and was received and stationed by Conference for Truro in Cornwall. But before Conference broke up, Mr. L——, the circuit steward—a man I had seen but three times in my life—wrote a letter, which so operated against me, that I was suspended. I now went to London; but not meeting with any constant employment, and being advised by my friends, I returned to Bristol, purchased the business in which I am now engaged, and, in June 1813, settled in life. Here I have been now for almost three years, and have occasionally laboured in the cause of Christ by preaching the Word. I have at different seasons felt much of the presence of God, and to the present time retain a sense of his mercy and love. But to describe the various convictions I have had, touching my giving myself up to the foreign missions, together with the effects which these convictions have produced, would be utterly impossible. All the circumstances of my life frequently pass in quiet succession before me, and plainly declare the design of the Lord. In particular, I acutely felt when obliged to leave the work by the intrigues of a designing man. My soul was bowed down, my heart overwhelmed, and I thought it the most painful dispensation I ever could pass through. Many strove to encourage me, and told me this trial was necessary to prepare me more especially for the Christian ministry, and that no doubt the hand of the Lord was in it, and would appear by and by. This was no joyful news to me. Every prospect appeared blasted, and every hope cut off. I gave way to my feelings; and as I was respectably settled, I thought of nothing but driving on in business and making a fortune. For some time providence seemed to favour my endeavours, until I at length got completely over head and ears in the cares of the world. And then the scale was turned. I lost very soon more than I had gained, and by this and other means was again stirred up in my soul, and brought back to God; and now here I am, a monument of his mercy and grace. All I have and am, belongs to Him. He made me, preserved me, redeemed me. My life has been crowned with his goodness; He has given me all things richly to enjoy; and in the spirit of grateful sacrifice, I humbly return all to Him. My life, my property, my talents, my time, my wife, my child, my enjoyments, and every unmentioned thing, I bring all to Him, and say, 'Here I am, O Lord, take me and use me for thy glory; employ me in thy cause, when Thou wilt, where Thou wilt, and as

Thou wilt. Only let me have thy presence, a sense of thy favour, and for me to live is Christ, and to die will be eternal gain.'"

This interesting document, which epitomizes so graphically the first twenty-three years of his life, was drawn up in accordance with a suggestion proposed and acted upon by himself and two other friends, who burned with a like desire to offer themselves for missionary work, and held weekly meetings at each other's houses for spiritual conversation and devotional exercises. Over the early disclosures of his youthful profligacy, affection would gladly throw a veil; but fidelity to the narration forbids, while the great and decided change wrought in his heart, magnifies the grace of God, and excites our adoring gratitude and praise. As will be readily seen, this autobiographical sketch extends rather beyond the term usually designated youth, but it was too complete in itself to be broken, and only by a few passing shadows anticipates the substance of the next chapter.

The amazing energy and perseverance of his early life, gave brilliant promise for the future, if only consecrated to the high and holy service of the Lord. That this glorious end was secured, will be sufficiently manifest in his subsequent history, while it clearly shows how faithfully he redeemed the solemn vow of consecration, with which his own narrative is sealed.

CHAPTER II.

BUSINESS LIFE.

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."—PAUL.

SECTION I.

BEING left fatherless at the tender age of seven years, the second son among five brothers and sisters, Mr. Pyer had very soon to commence the battle of life on his own account; and, as we have already seen, this was done in the first instance in no very judicious or creditable manner. His youthful indiscretion was, however, mercifully overruled, and by the intervention of Divine providence, the untoward current of his juvenile career turned into a more genial and purifying channel. Still it was some time before the incessant yearnings of his heart while yet a child, and which seemed only to strengthen with his growth, had their fulfilment.

From the year 1808, when eighteen years of age, he kept a pretty full record of his religious experience. It presents the varied features common to such chronicles, disclosing great searchings of heart, profound humiliation for sin, and contrition for frequent failures in struggling against temptation and the corruptions of an evil nature; and at the same time breathes the most fervent desires after entire consecration to the service of God, more especially in the Christian ministry and in foreign missionary labour. From these diaries we shall cull pretty largely, preferring to give his own simple, unstudied narration of events and experiences, to any statements of our own.

While filling various situations of a mercantile character, up to the time of his own establishment in business, he diligently attended the means of grace, became a teacher in Guinea Street Sabbath school, and was often engaged in village exhortations, and other religious exercises. At this period of his life he generally rose at four, in order to secure time for reading the Scriptures and prayer; and in other ways sought after mental and spiritual improvement.

A few passages from his diary will evince the general tone of his mind, and the foundation on which his faith and hope rested, at this early stage of his religious experience.

"Saturday, June 16, 1808.—On reviewing my past life, I am astonished at the goodness of God, and ashamed of my unfaithfulness. I have been lately led to inquire, what has religion done for me? And although I have been exceedingly unfaithful, I can rejoice and testify it has accomplished much in my behalf. It has preserved me from the gratification of sensual desires and youthful lusts; it has given me acquaintance with the Book of God; it has taught me to know myself, and to know something of God; it has given me, in some degree, to perceive the path that leadeth unto life, and guided my feet towards it; it has enlightened my understanding; it has rescued me from the misery I was so eagerly pursuing, and given me a relish for divine things; but time would fail to tell all it has done for me. May I be found faithful to the grace imparted, and receive much more abundantly!"

His intense desire to be employed more fully in the Lord's vineyard is constantly breathed forth in language like the following:—

"October 14, 1809.—I feel the cause of God lies very near my heart, and oftentimes I feel a strong impulse urging me forward to desire opportunity and ability to speak in the name of my adorable Redeemer. Indeed, when I look into the minutes of the last Conference, and see there are five missionaries wanted for the West Indies, my soul burns within me, and I am ready to say, 'Lord, qualify me, and send me forth.' But when I recollect my inability, my unworthiness, and my inconstancy, my soul is humbled, and I am almost constrained to conclude that such desires only spring from a secret wish to be thought something of, and to make a figure in the world."

How clearly does the closing sentence of this paragraph reveal the jealousy with which he sifted his motives, and sought to lay a pure offering on the altar of his God.

At length his desires were partially realized; and upon the occasion of delivering his first sermon, from Ps. xxvii. 14, to which allusion was made in the preceding chapter, the local preacher who accompanied him said, during their walk home, "You ought not to hold your tongue;" while his own private comment was, "Blessed be the name of the Lord, I found his strength supported my weakness. I was enabled to speak with much freedom, and felt my own soul abundantly comforted."

Two days later, we find an entry of this kind:

"Tuesday, March 13 (1810).—Yesterday and to-day I have been exercised a good deal. Proud thoughts have risen up, and my heart is so deceiving, I fear I have been led astray. Oh, how careful and watchful I need to be!"

Pride seems to have been one of his youthful and prominent besetments, which he often secretly lamented and strove to subdue. A few months subsequently he writes:—

"Monday, May 21.—To-day a good friend of mine tendered me some advice. The occasion of it was this: Some persons had been talking to her about me, and suggested that I was too forward. Now the Lord knows my heart. Pride has been my besetting sin, and I have, in too many instances heretofore, pushed myself forward; but now I fight against it with all my heart. I would not have a proud thought—I would not have a proud look; but pride is very subtle, and creeps in unawares. O Lord, deliver me! Bring me into the valley, and then let me, under the protection of thy wing, grow up into Thee, my living head in all things."

"Thus let me strive and labour still,
With humble zeal to do thy will."

Again:—

"April 2 (1812).—Alas! my heart is proud and vain, and the praise of men does me injury. In these respects, my friends are too kind, and my soul suffers for it. God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

While pursuing with diligence his secular calling, he had frequent opportunities of proclaiming "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and though at times cast down by a consciousness of his deficiencies, he gradually gained confidence, and ultimately became very popular, so as to be followed by crowds, whenever his appointments were known—his youthful appearance and earnestness of manner, atoning for defects which must have been but too apparent to critical hearers.

In August, 1810, he made arrangements to join his eldest brother in the wholesale and retail drug business; but only two days after the engagement was formed, a calamitous fire broke out in their house in Redcliff Street, the particulars of which are thus detailed:—

"Thursday, August 23.—I now sit down to record some few particulars of a most alarming and awful visitation, which has been a source of deep affliction to all our family, my eldest brother's house having been consumed by fire, and two of his children and a servant having perished in the flames. On Sunday morning, August the 12th, about half-past seven o'clock, as my brother was quitting the counting-house, a stool, on which he had been sitting while making up a prescription, fell against a large bottle of spirits, which burst; and the contents ran along the floor to the fire-place, so as immediately to ignite, and set the whole room in a blaze. Finding it impossible by any means to extinguish the burning liquid, my brother ran up to his wife, who was still in bed, and wrapping a portion of her clothes about her, took her from the back bed-room into the dining-room, intending to ascend the second staircase to rescue the children; but the fire had spread so rapidly, that the staircase was enveloped in flames, and the room in which he then was, was filled with smoke, so that in returning to the window he was nearly suffocated. Rhoda, one of the servants, being in the kitchen when the fire broke out, ran through the shop into the street, and spread the alarm there; and my brother, when running up-stairs to the rescue of his wife, alarmed the servants and children on the upper floor by the cry of 'Fire!' Ann, the nursemaid, taking up the eldest child, and leaving Mrs. Reed—Mrs. Pyer's monthly nurse—with the two infants, James and Emily, ran into Mr. Moon's room, and from the window first dropped the child into the street, and then jumped out herself. Mr. M., the shopman, was by this time awoke, and after partially dressing, got out of the window, and for some time hung by the sill, then with his feet broke the dining-room windows below, and thus let himself down upon the top of the shop-window. By this time a short ladder had been procured, on which he got, and took Mrs. P. down in his arms, my brother having previously jumped into the street. About eight o'clock I was called from Guinea Street Chapel, and informed of the occurrence. And by nine the fire was extinguished; but not before poor Nurse Reed, and dear little Jim and Emily, had perished. How to account for Mrs. R.'s inactivity we know not, as she had been some time up, and was engaged in dressing the children when the fire broke out, and might easily have followed the nursemaid to the front of the house. Probably the alarm into which she was suddenly thrown, might have occasioned fits, or otherwise deprived her of the power of recollection, and thus prevented her attempting to escape. Every effort was made on the outside of the house to rescue both her and the children, but, alas! without success; for, after the fire was subdued, Mr. M. found them on one of the beds in the nursery, burnt almost to cinders. Thus in less than two hours, the whole of the household furniture, wearing apparel, stock in trade, etc., etc, and three lives, have fallen a prey to the devouring element. How deep are the mysteries of thy providence, O God! How unsearchable are thy ways! My poor brother and his wife have been awfully affected, and all the family have suffered the most poignant distress. The stock and furniture were insured, but £270 in cash, notes, and the greater part of the account-books, were entirely destroyed. A subscription has been entered into by the tradespeople of the neighbourhood for the servants and the orphans of poor Nurse Reed, so that I hope their pecuniary losses will be made up to them. On the whole, I cannot withhold two observations.

"1. I desire to adore the wisdom of God in taking the children, concerning whose happiness there can be no doubt; and the nurse, of whose readiness for the better world we have great hopes; and in sparing those who were least prepared.

"2. I would admire his providence in preventing the spread of the conflagration, for had the fire communicated with the warehouse, on account of the large quantity of combustible matter it contained, in all probability the whole neighbourhood would have suffered. 'Thy judgments are a great deep.'"

About a fortnight after this terrible event, which gave the subject of our narrative such full employment, that we find him lamenting its interference with his customary devotional exercises, we have the first mention in his journal, of a friend, whose history for many subsequent years was closely associated with his own, and gave an entirely new direction to his movements. This reference is dated "Friday, Sept. 7th (1810).—The Local preachers have begun a meeting at Mr. George Pocock's, on Sabbath mornings, for the purpose of conferring with, and helping, one another. Last Sunday I attended, and found it profitable."

Mr. Pocock was the principal of a very large and influential boarding-school, on St. Michael's Hill, Bristol. He possessed great energy of character, and a burning zeal for the ignorant, depraved, and neglected population all around him. Finding in Mr. Pyer a man of kindred soul and sentiment, and brought by a series of providential events into nearer fellowship, they became eventually fellow-labourers in the great work of evangelization. But we must not anticipate their more united history.

In May, 1811, his connection with his eldest brother terminated. One or two incidents noted in his diary in the interim may be of some interest:—

"May 23rd (1811).—This week the Lord has wrought a great deliverance for his people, Lord Sidmouth's measure to abridge the liberties of Dissenters having received a signal overthrow in the House of Lords. On Sunday last a deputation, consisting of the Rev. R. Reece, Mark Wilks, and Mr. Butterworth, jun., visited this city, bringing petitions against the measure, from a committee in London, which were distributed among the various Dissenting congregations, and obtained thousands of signatures. Those in our chapel were signed by 2260. On Monday a public meeting was held in the Guildhall. Resolutions were passed and a petition adopted, which in five hours received 1953 signatures. These were sent off by the deputation the same evening, and to-day we learned that the bill was lost. All glory be to God."

"June 28th.—To-day, by mere accident, I met with a book in which my dear brother George has begun to record his experience. The first passage in it deeply affected me. It is as follows:—'I was convinced of sin under the preaching of my brother at Westbury. Being fond of going about with him to his several appointments, and hearing him preach at the forementioned place from these words, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," I was convinced of the necessity of giving up all sin, and every evil thing, till I found my peace and pardon sealed with God.' This happened, therefore, on the 10th of last February. O Lord! Thou knowest my silence praiseth Thee! I was aware of the change which has taken place in my dear brother, but was not at all conscious till this moment that the Lord had been pleased to make me the instrument of effecting it, as he never told me, nor has he, that I know of, told any other person. To God be all the glory."

In the latter part of this year (1811) he was appointed a travelling preacher in the Oxford circuit, and during his ministrations became acquainted with the lady whom he afterwards married. About twelve months after we find him filling a situation with a grocer in London. A brief record in connection with this event will give an insight into the hardships of such a position, which we may hope the lapse of fifty years has done much to alter:—

"Sept. 21st (1812).—I am already sick of a shopman's situation in London. I have to fag hard from six to ten every day (Saturdays till twelve), and have not one moment to call my own, except on Sundays. Mr. D. is also a curious old bachelor, and is so difficult in his temper, it is next to impossible to please him. A few minutes are all the time allowed for meals; and if these are exceeded, the bell is rung, and a storm generally follows. Not a moment is unoccupied. There are five of us behind the counter, and we take about £100 per day. Surely West Indian slavery is hardly worse than this; at least, as regards confinement and incessant labour."

Just before entering on the above engagement.

an incident occurred which he thus modestly relates :—

"Lord's-day, August 30th.—Went this morning to Lambeth Chapel expecting to hear Dr. Clarke; found the congregation waiting, the doctor not having arrived, and was soon after surprised by a gentleman coming to the pew where I was, and requesting me to conduct the service. I refused, and he retired. Presently two others applied, saying they had sent into the neighbourhood to find a minister, and entreated I would come and read the lessons for the day till he should arrive. I consented, and when I had done, one of them brought the hymn-book to the desk, saying they had not been able to find the minister, and then presenting the book to me in the presence of the entire congregation, insisted on my ascending the pulpit. I did so with reluctance, all the while trembling at my temerity, and wishing I had gone anywhere rather than to Lambeth Chapel. But while preaching, the good and gracious Saviour wonderfully helped me, so that I got through better than I had anticipated; though the thought that that vast congregation had come to hear the good Doctor, the consciousness of my inability to appear as his substitute, and the fact that look where I would, I saw persons taking notes of my incoherent and extemporaneous discourse, well nigh overwhelmed me. After the service, the friends were exceedingly kind. Many persons came into the vestry to thank me, and to inquire who the stripling was. Several invited me to dine with them; and the kind friend whose invitation I accepted, when he learnt my history, showed me much sympathy, and encouraged me to believe that I shall soon be employed in the ministry. I am informed that Dr. Clarke is detained in Oxford, where he is gone on Government business; but how the good folks suspected me to be a preacher, and so pounced upon me, I am at a loss to divine. Text, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 23."

SECTION II.

While his preaching was so generally acceptable amongst the people, it seems somewhat strange that obstacles should arise, and objections be made to his full recognition as a local preacher. Some of the charges preferred against him, in the light of the present day, appear both curious and ludicrous. For instance, at a meeting of the travelling and local preachers, Mr. Entwistle, the then President of the Conference, addressing him, said, "Brother Pyer, be assured I have no prejudice against you; so far from it, I can assure you, that when I first saw you, I began to be prepossessed in your favour. I was taken with your person, manners, and conversation, and, therefore, believe me, I am quite impartial. But as the brethren are so backward in speaking, I'll tell you. Last Wednesday, at our quarterly meetings, it was said you were trifling and *foppish*—as a proof of which you were observed to carry a *fashionable great-coat*. It was also said, that you had been saying some disrespectful things of the preachers." In replying, Mr. Pyer says, "As to foppery, it is true I have a new great-coat, and for aught I know it may be made in a fashionable style. Be that as it may, it is a very comfortable coat, and whether it is fashionable or not, I leave those who are better acquainted with the fashions than I am, to determine. If I have degenerated in this thing, I believe in other respects I am perfectly plain; (and, thought I, why not Messrs. C., W., and P. fops—the one for wearing powder, the other for having a double-breasted coat, and the third for appearing in frilled shirts and fashionable bows? But, alas! prejudice meanly descends to notice anything, however frivolous). The other charge was a serious one, and I therefore again requested something more specific."

A novel objection this, especially viewed in contrast with his contempt (in later years, at least) for dress *à la mode*, simply as such. One can hardly conceive it possible that, under any circumstances, he was ever guilty of dandyism. Alas! for the plain, quakerly attire of primitive Wesleyans, where can it now be found?—As to the more serious charges, though destitute of evidence to confirm them, we can readily imagine his natural flow of animal spirits, ere the withering blast of affliction had nipped their buoyancy, might occasionally exceed the gravity supposed to be due to the preacher's office; and his innate honesty of heart and outspoken truthfulness might also have led him, in certain circumstances, to dilate perhaps too freely on the peculiarities of his brethren; and we all know how easy it is for the ear and tongue of prejudice to magnify such peccadilloes into crimes of some magnitude. We believe any one conversant with our friend's general character will recognize at once the plausibility of our remarks, and give us credit for sincerity in submitting them.

At the close of the year 1812, Mr. Pyer returned to Bristol, and succeeded to his eldest brother's business, and on the 17th of June of the following year was united in marriage to Miss Mary Smith. Her father was a respectable farmer in the village of Harwell, Berks, about ten miles from Oxford. There were circumstances connected with this union which, in the outset, occasioned him some anxiety. Miss Smith's relatives, being members of the Established Church, were not altogether pleased with her choice, and proposals were made to him to seek episcopal ordination and admission into the National Church. As a Wesleyan, his views of ecclesiastical polity were by no means outraged by such a proposal, and he accordingly had an interview with Mr. Bridges, the well-known expositor of the 119th Psalm, and also attended a meeting of clergymen, whose object was to train young men for the ministry, without sending them to the University. His doctrinal views, however, known conventually as Arminian, proved an obstacle which they deemed insurmountable; and he was too honest a man, even in those early years, to violate his conscience by subscribing to that which his religious convictions did not then approve. "Notwithstanding, the worthy man advised me," says he, "to renounce the Methodists altogether, and said, if I studied the languages, they would pay a Professor to teach me, and then procure me ordination." Other proposals, promising great temporal advantages, were also made to him by his wife's uncle, Christopher Smith, Esq., who for many years represented St. Albans in Parliament, was an alderman of the city of London, and in 1819 Lord Mayor; and was now the chief opponent of her marriage. In the bosom of his family she had spent a large portion of her youth, her cousin (his only daughter) being much attached to her; and on these grounds his patronage and approval of her marriage were earnestly sought, and at length somewhat reluctantly obtained.

Mr. Pyer's memoranda at this time indicate great anxiety to be guided aright, and to follow conscientiously the will of God; proving how alive he was to the fact, that where the affections are interested, our interpretations of the leadings of divine providence should be all the more cautiously observed and acted upon.

We hazard the above remark in view of some observations penned by the subject of our memoir, many years later, when trials and disappointments (especially regarding the ministry) led him to conjecture, that in marrying and entering into business, he had possibly mistaken God's will concerning him. The private memorandum alluded to runs thus :—

"What a mystery is divine providence! How unfathomable its depths! During my pilgrimage here below, how strangely have I been tossed about! Just as I have been settled in this or that situation, some circumstances of one nature or another have occurred, indicating the necessity of a change; and thus have I been driven hither and thither, while others have gone quietly on their way, unmolested and undisturbed. Infinite goodness has often appeared on my behalf, and yet deep and severe afflictions for the last five years have been my unvarying lot. And still the end is buried in oblivion. When a man makes a false step, and gets out of his providential sphere, how hard is it for him to get in again! Nay, does he ever? I have tried again and again, but, alas! all my efforts have hitherto been blasted with disappointment, and sometimes I am ready to lie down in despair of ever succeeding. But, O God! Thou canst make a way; let me sink into thy will. Let my whole life be consecrated to Thee, and do Thou with me as seemeth good in thy sight. Is there anything too hard for Thee, and can it be that Thou art unmindful of thy unworthy, unfaithful creature, who now looks up to Thee, and claims thy blessing and salvation? No, Lord, Thou dost all things well; and when Thou hast tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Such were his reflections when, heart-stricken and desolate, he stood amid the wreck of hopes, whose launch had been full of promise, and with the sensitiveness of a jealous fear, was ready to attribute their failure to the retributive justice of an offended God. But, to return from this digression, we find him writing thus on his wedding-day:—

"Thursday, June 17th, 1813.—Myself and my dear Mary were married in the fear of the Lord. I felt it a solemn, precious, important season. The

Rev. George Knight, curate of the parish, united our hands, and I believe the Lord graciously condescended to unite our hearts. In the morning, while praying for a blessing upon us both, the Lord in mercy visited my soul, and refreshed it with the consolations of his gracious Spirit. He lifted upon me the light of his countenance, and made my heart glad with the holy influences of his divine love. Afterwards, while mentioning the circumstance to my dear Mary, the Lord visited me afresh, and inspired such a spirit of gratitude as overwhelmed my soul, and sunk me in the lowest self-abasement before Him. Oh! how precious to be thus drawn out after God! After we had retired from the altar, Mr. K. walked with us in the orchard, and gave us the most excellent advice. He also prayed with us most affectionately, and commended us both to the blessing and protection of heaven. Surely we are subjects of many prayers."

Alas! but a few short years of domestic bliss were his portion, and then there came a heavy, heavy cloud, which mysteriously hovered over the remainder of his life; proving a solution to much that was enigmatical in his character, at the same time being in itself of such a nature, as would utterly have crushed a spirit less buoyant than his own, or one of less vigorous and earnest faith.

In 1815 his whole heart and soul were again powerfully aroused to desire missionary work. He states his views very freely in a letter to the Rev. J. Barber, of which the following is an extract. After describing his intense longing for the work, even from infancy, and giving a brief sketch of his personal history, he says :—

"The Lord has truly surrounded me with his goodness and mercy. He has blessed me in my friends, my family; but especially in my own soul. But, sir, a lively conviction that I was not in my place, has marred my peace, and never could I feel contented, but when contemplating a missionary station, and in imagination transporting myself to distant climes, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Every missionary letter, every missionary sermon, every degree of intelligence connected with missionary work, has been eagerly perused and ardently prayed over, even with strong cries and tears. In particular, Mr. Bunting's sermon last May, previous to the formation of the Missionary Society, was fastened on my soul, and the effect of that sermon, and the proceedings at the formation of the society, I have never been able to rid myself of. I have reflected again and again upon the subject—I have made it matter of earnest and constant prayer —and invariably have found my mind supremely happy when resolved to sacrifice all for the sake of preaching the gospel in the East. However, I have always anticipated strong objections on the part of my wife. Any opposition raised by others I could easily overcome, but should my wife oppose, I thought I could never get over that; and firmly believing she would do so, I have entirely kept the subject from her. But the late calls for more labourers in Ceylon, have sounded in my ears louder than ever, and made me wish more and more to open the matter to her. I deferred, I prayed, I knew not what to do. But last Wednesday the Lord blessed my soul in a remarkable manner—my heart was filled with his presence and love. I saw the obligations under which I was laid—I discovered the state of the heathen, the love of Christ to them, the promises relating to the latter-day glory; and I could hold out no longer. Therefore, at supper, I ventured to unbosom myself to my dear wife. And what was the result? Not a single opposing word. Her reply was—'If I thought it was the will of the Lord that I should go, she would gladly accompany me to the most distant regions, in so blessed and glorious a work;' and has since then evidenced a pious resignation to whatever the Lord may call me to perform. My feelings on this occasion it is impossible to describe. I wept, I rejoiced, I gave glory to God, and felt a disposition to go anywhere, so that I might promote the knowledge of my blessed Lord and Saviour. And I have since this, and do now, see my call to the East as clearly as perhaps I possibly can do."

It is most affecting to note his strong and unswerving desires for missionary work (of which the above is but a specimen), and his extreme disappointment at the obstacles thrown in his way. Notwithstanding the many efforts he made to engage in this branch of ministerial service, his hopes were constantly thwarted, partly by the opposition of family connections, and the decision of the Missionary Committee, couched in the following terms:—

"LONDON, *July* 25, 1816.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—The Missionary Committee have fully considered the letter transmitted to them by Mr. J. Taylor, and desire me to assure you of their high esteem and Christian regard; but that, considering your growing family, it does not appear practicable to send you out as a missionary. They affectionately advise you to continue your useful labours, in that sphere in which you are placed in the vineyard of Christ. As several travelling preachers, and a sufficient number of young men, have offered their services for foreign stations, they decline taking married men except in very extraordinary cases. Praying that your ministry in your local calling may be made an abundant blessing, and that both you and yours may enjoy every temporal and spiritual consolation in Christ Jesus, I remain, on behalf of the Committee, yours very affectionately,

"JAMES BUCKLEY, *Secy.*"

But his hopes were ultimately frustrated by the protracted mental affliction of his beloved wife. It may be necessary to make some reference to this heavy trial; but the subject is too painful to dwell upon, and will only be referred to, as occasion may seem to demand in the succeeding pages. Symptoms of this dire calamity first showed themselves soon after the birth of her second child—the result of a sudden fright acting upon a highly nervous temperament, a few weeks before her confinement. Intervals of amended health occurred; and in hope of effecting complete restoration, her husband was induced, in 1817, to remove from Bristol to Newbury, that she might enjoy the benefit of her native air, and be nearer her parental home. From friends who knew her in the morning of her wedded life, reports have reached us of her personal loveliness, amiability, piety, and general attractiveness of mind and manners; and some touching memorials remain of her taste for literature, in poems and brief meditations on various passages of Scripture. Our own recollections are sad and heart-rending; but to him upon whose pathway fell the life-long shadow of buried joys, oh! who can fathom their depth of bitterness? Though frequently brought to the verge of the grave, in the early stages of her malady, she yet survived him three years, her troubled spirit being at last tranquilly released, May 20, 1862, and is doubtless now rejoicing with his, before the throne of God and the Lamb.

It is easy to discover from the preceding pages the bent of Mr. Pyer's inclinations, and to see that business, in the abstract, was by no means suited to his talents or disposition; and though he knew it not, God was wonderfully preparing a way for his entire consecration to more congenial work, and doubtless, by his heavy trials, fitting him for its prosecution.

We cannot close the present chapter, without one more reference to his ardent breathings after such service, terminating with a prophetic wish, which became so literally fulfilled, as almost to surprise one. He had been offered by a pious captain, a *free* passage to the East Indies, and thus comments on the event:—

"August 23 (1815).—Whether this is from the Lord or not, I am not prepared to say; but, blessed be his name, I feel He has made me willing to go east or west, just as seemeth best to Him. I only wait for Him to open the way. May I be directed by his counsel, and afterwards received into his glory! I bless his name, this is all I wish to live for—to be useful to my fellow-creatures. While I can promote the Redeemer's glory in the salvation of men, I shall be content to stay on earth; but when I can no longer do this, then I pray God that I may—

'My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live.'"

Dear sainted spirit! how graciously was thy prayer registered on high; and in an hour we thought not, the message sent: "It is enough, come up hither;" "Enter, good and faithful servant, into the joy of thy Lord."

Four-and-forty years of active, earnest service, faithfully and lovingly rendered, and then came the *literal* answer to his prayer.*

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* We cannot forbear directing attention to the remarkable coincidence between the wish just referred to, and an allusion in letter No. 14 in our concluding chapter.

CHAPTER III.

TENT MISSIONARY LABOURS.

"This is true liberty, when free-born men,
Having to advise the public, may speak free;
Which he who can and will, deserves high praise."
EURIPIDES.

"'Tis liberty of heart derived from heaven,
Bought with *his* blood, who gave it to mankind,
And sealed with the same token."
COWPER.

SECTION I.

AMID the multiplied agencies of the present day, and the success which to so large an extent has attended evangelistic efforts, it is difficult to understand the dearth of their existence some fifty years ago, or to form a correct idea of the stolid ignorance and religious apathy which then prevailed amongst the masses of our population.* The more vital and energizing spirit which had been awakened by the powerful preaching of Wesley and Whitefield was beginning to subside, or had already settled down into organized Independency or stereotyped Methodism. Yet within the pale of the latter community, arose some who were afresh baptized for the dead; and in the good old city of Bristol, enriched by many historical associations, there were a few earnest spirits, who mourned over the iniquities of the land, and devised means for their removal. Two warm-hearted local preachers, who had often found it difficult to procure rooms for village preaching, first conceived the idea of something portable, such as a marquee or tent, which might be used with advantage during the summer months. The idea was soon carried out by Mr. Pocock, one of the originators, to whom reference was made in the preceding chapter; and the first tent was erected on the 24th of April, 1814, at Whitchurch, near

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* In illustration of this, even as extending to the higher circles of society, we give the following fact from Mr. Pocock's "History of the Tent," etc. It occurred in his native town, Hungerford. He says:—"A person whom I knew as well as my own father, feeling himself to be indeed, what he had often confessed himself to be in word, 'a miserable sinner,' was so oppressed with a wounded conscience that he went to the minister, and told him he could find no peace, that his sins were intolerable, a burden too heavy to be borne. The minister appeared quite alarmed, and observed, 'I hope you have not committed a breach of the sixth commandment?' He answered, 'No, sir.' 'Nor of

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the seventh, I hope?' 'No, sir. No, I have neither been guilty of murder nor adultery; but it seems as though I was the very worst sinner in the world.' 'Well, my good friend, tell me plainly what it is that you have been guilty of?' 'There is not a day in my life, sir, but I do something or other I ought not to do.' 'Well,' said the minister, 'I believe I have found out the cause of your malady. You have been amongst the Methodists.' 'No indeed, sir,' replied the man. 'Then, if you have committed none of these atrocities,' replied the instructor, 'you distress yourself without cause. All that you have to do is to attend to your church, and if you find yourself low, you should go and mix with pleasant company, and take an enlivening cup of beer; and whatever you do, don't get among the Methodists.'" "Such," says Mr. P., "was the gospel of this divine;" and then adds, with characteristic *naïveté*, "Oh, when shall the oft-repeated prayer be answered—That it may please Thee to illuminate all bishops, priests, and deacons with the knowledge and understanding of thy holy Word."

Bristol. The ministers who officiated on the occasion were Mr. George Pocock, Mr. James Roberts, and Mr. John Pyer, together with some other local preachers in the Methodist connection; all of whom were encouraged by the success of their first effort, to hope for most cheering and beneficial results. The novelty of the scheme, in the very outset, attracted considerable attention; but the zeal and fervour of the preachers, quickly riveted the deeper emotions of the increasing crowds, that gathered beneath the outstretched canvas whenever the "Itinerant Temple" was erected. Opposition also lent its aid to popularize this newly-started project; but, through evil report and good report, it made rapid progress in public favour, and for some years was an instrumentality greatly owned by God, in the conversion of sinners.

In the first instance, Mr. Pocock devoted his summer vacations to this itinerant work almost single-handed; but its success was so great, and the number of applications for a visit so multiplied upon them, that it soon became imperative to extend the prescribed time of action, and increase the staff of labourers. From the spirit already evinced in the private memoranda placed before our readers, it will be readily supposed that Mr. Pyer would enter heart and soul into such labours; and from the earliest commencement his name was associated with them, and his utmost energy devoted to their promotion.

In this age of *revival* excitement, it may be interesting to recall some of what we may truly call, the *marvellous* scenes and circumstances by which this new movement was distinguished. In the autumn of 1815, a remarkable revival took place at Bedminster, through the agency of tent-preaching. The meetings were frequently prolonged to three, four, or even five hours, and even then "they could with difficulty tear themselves away, from the cries and groans of poor souls in distress." A few instances, such as would perhaps startle a modern congregation, may be cited as specimens of the power which accompanied the Word delivered by these earnest followers of the Lord Jesus. On one occasion a very interesting confession was made in the Tent before all the people. "Soon after the service had commenced, a decently-dressed woman fell upon her knees, and with a loud voice exclaimed, 'Lord, have mercy upon my stubborn soul. Thou knowest what I said last night, that I would never come to this place, and that no one should make me kneel down on the grass; but Thou, O Lord, hast shown me what a vile wretch I am. Lord, save me, or I perish.'" In such language as this, she continued for some time confessing her sinfulness, and imploring God's mercy; and after the meeting was over, the following particulars were learnt respecting her: A young person who lodged with her, had told her of what was passing at the Tent; she laughed at her, and ridiculed the whole proceeding, saying, "She wondered at people going to such a place as that, when there was a church to go to, and that no person should ever get her there," etc. During the next day, however, thinking over what she had said, she was inclined to go, more for the gratification of her curiosity than from any better motive, and here she soon found such a solemnity, and felt so much of the power and presence of God, that she was the very first, that night, who was compelled to bow the knee and cry for mercy; so that she who just before was such a despiser, found the Tent to be none other than the house of God, and returning home, could say of a truth, "God was there, and I knew it not." Another circumstance occurred there the same evening, which will live eternally in the recollection of many then present. A certain woman of the company, while listening with abstract attention to the word of God, became so absorbed in the subject, that forgetting where she was, or by whom surrounded, she exclaimed, "Oh sin, oh sin! what a dreadful thing sin is." These words were uttered with so much feeling, so slowly and clearly, and in a tone so expressive and penetrating, that the preacher made a pause, and the whole multitude was deeply affected. More than usual perspicuity, had accompanied the description of man's degradation, guilt, and misery, producing such a general humiliation, that the mind thus prepared, was instantaneously overwhelmed, by the unexpected and pathetic cry of this female. A similar effect never was, and never will be, produced by a study of the passions, nor by the eloquence of man. Nothing but the operation of that Spirit promised to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come, can ever give such views as we all had at the moment that expression was uttered. "Oh what a dreadful thing sin is!" Such were the deep impressions made at that time, that one and another broke out in prayer, while all appeared to be mutually engaged, working out their own salvation with fear and trembling. The power of the Lord was there, both to wound and to heal. After some time, the woman who had been in such an agony, and who had sunk into a kind of swoon, began to recover herself, and cried for mercy. She often called on the name of the Saviour, repeating the word Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, with a truly significant modulation of voice. One of the servants of the Lord (Mr. H. Roberts), inspired with the harmony of that word, caught it from the woman's lips, and broke out in the most rapturous animation of spirit:—

"Sweetest note of seraph's song,
Sweetest note of mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, Jesus, flow along,
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!"

This seraphic language was uttered with indescribable propriety of emphasis, and produced a sensation altogether as heavenly, as that was awful when the horrors of sin were set before us. *Then* we seemed entering into the blackness of darkness, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, but *now* the opening heavens around us shone with beams of sacred bliss, and with the poet we could add:—

"Hark, the thrilling symphonies,
Seem, methinks, to seize us;
Answer we those heavenly lays,
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!"

The whole company this evening was deeply affected with an unusual revelation of the contrasted truths of this passage of Scripture—"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The meeting concluded under a lively and comfortable sense of God's presence and blessing, and the servants of the Lord felt greatly encouraged to proceed.*

Upon another occasion, the same pamphlet relates:—

"In the afternoon Mr. Pyer addressed the people from these words, 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' etc. The Tent, with its large new wing, was completely crowded. Many were smitten by the arrows of conviction, and brought down by the mighty power of God. Besides those that were within, about one hundred persons were on the outside, listening with the greatest seriousness. Among these, an aged man was observed kneeling on the grass, with his forehead reclined upon his staff. A stander-by noticing him in that posture, and observing tears falling from his face to the ground, asked him in a whisper the cause of his distress. He replied, 'I am the vilest of the vile. I have backslidden from God.' This was uttered in a tone of the deepest contrition, and the unhappy man remained in that posture, weeping, until the meeting was ended; after which the person who had spoken to him, being interested in the poor man's expression and manner, inquired more particularly into his history, and was informed by him, among other things, that the first sermon Dr. Coke ever preached outside the church walls, was in his dwelling-house at South Petherton, etc. 'At that time,' he said, 'and for years afterwards, I walked in the light of God's countenance. However, I foolishly turned from the path of righteousness; I have been as a vagabond upon the earth for these twenty years, travelling the country as a sawyer, being almost continually in the company of drunkards, spending many of my nights and days in pothouses, until you see what I have brought myself to. I am almost naked, half-starved, my body is worn down in sin. I am dropping into the grave without God, and without hope in the world.' Oh! how hard is the way of transgressors! In the evening a still larger congregation was present, and an equal outpouring of God's Spirit took place. The old sawyer waited the whole of the interim in the Tent, that he might have a place to sit down where he could see the preacher. He was still deeply affected, appearing like one receiving sentence of death, or rather as a condemned sinner. The words preached from were, 'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.' The next evening it was agreed to give all the people at the Tent an invitation to the chapel at Bedminster. On this occasion the place was thronged to excess. Five persons acknowledged a sense of divine mercy, blessing and praising the Lord for the peace which passeth understanding, and no one can say how many there were, who, from the disquietude of their souls, were heard crying for mercy. Among these was the wretched old sawyer, who, being spoken to on the state of his mind, by the person who conversed with him at the tent, observed—'I bless the Lord, sir, He has softened my hard heart; and I have a faint hope that God, for Christ's sake, can, after all I have done, show me mercy.' It was eleven o'clock before the people could be prevailed on to separate."

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* "History of the Itinerant Temple," p. 89.

Mr. Pyer writes:—

"Sunday, October 7, 1815.—At seven o'clock this morning, met twelve persons in class at Bedminster, who never met before. One young woman is the daughter of the late Henry Pearse, *alias* the Game Chicken, the celebrated prize-fighter. What a trophy! I was much pleased with another, who stated that on Monday, when a young woman (her companion) came home deeply convinced, she ridiculed her much; but being persuaded to come and hear for herself, she did so, at the same time determined (to use her own expression) she would not bow her knees, nor be made to groan. 'However,' she continued, 'the Lord met me, and such was my distress, that for two days and nights I could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep.' But now, blessed be God, she is completely free."

Such are a few specimens of the early effects of Tent preaching. Many other narratives, equally striking, will be interspersed in the extracts from Mr. Pyer's journal, during the next nine or ten years, which we now proceed to lay before our readers. They will speak for themselves of the earnestness and zeal with which he gave himself to the work of the Lord, while eternity alone can reveal the number of precious souls that shall be his "crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus":—

"Monday, December 18, 1815."—He writes, "I wish I could always preach as I did yesterday morning. I saw the effect upon the people, caught the opportunity, raised the effect, and concluded just as the principal emotion seemed to take place—a thing, perhaps, I never did before—consequently my sermon was *short*, a wonderful thing for me. I see the power of oratory is not the most insignificant endowment of a preacher. Oh! that I may improve every talent to the glory of God! Upon reflection, too, I think my sermon was exceedingly simple, more so than any I have preached for a long time; and what is better, it was attended with an unction from above. Oh! Lord, what is oratory, what is simplicity, without this? Oh! may all my sermons be attended with this sacred fire, and then sinners will be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

Only the Sabbath before, four persons had professed conviction of sin under one sermon, which he thus notifies:—

"Oh! that they may be found steadfast, and be thine in that day! Is not this encouragement for me? What! four precious souls awakened under one sermon! Glory, glory be to God; to his name be all the praise!"

What his estimate of ministerial propriety was, in this comparatively early stage of his own career, may be inferred from the following extract:—

"Heard to-night what some people would, no doubt, call a fine sermon, but to me it was far otherwise. Fine phrases, well-turned periods, flights of fancy, are not food for the soul. 'What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.' When I see in a minister of Jesus Christ the flippancy of a comedian, or the carelessness of a half-taught schoolboy, I cannot help thinking that the examples of holy zeal and devout solemnity, furnished by Christ and his apostles, have been thrown away upon such a person, especially when the same behaviour is apparent in the solemn and sacred exercise of prayer, which was too much the case to-night. Oh! when will such Methodist preachers as these learn good old John Wesley's rule, 'I design plain truth for plain people.'"

He began the year 1816 with the following reflections:—

"January 1.—I am spared to the beginning of a new year; and have been enabled to begin it in the fear of the Lord. Oh that I may, if spared, spend it agreeably to his glory! I see there are before me great opportunities of usefulness, and great will be my condemnation if these are not improved. I am called to minister the word of life, to preach the gospel of Christ. In my labours I am blest, and the word of God is glorified. If I am watchful, I shall be holy; if unwatchful, my mind will be elated with my success, and the praise of the people will be sought, instead of the honour which cometh from God. This is a fatal snare—one to which I am liable—one to which I am exposed, it being laid for my feet in all parts of the circuit, and found in the constant conversation of my friends. Lord, undertake for me! What is the praise of man? What are the commendations of the people? Empty bubbles, straws, chaff, smoke, which the wind driveth away. May my every talent be this year employed to the glory of God! May I lose no part of my reward, by yielding to the praise of men!"

And amid the pressure of business and family claims, we find him labouring with increased delight and energy, in his favourite employment.

Scarcely had the first breath of spring—so refreshing to the toil-worn inhabitants of a crowded city—invited the Bristolians to inhale its balmy fragrance, than a sad spectacle was presented to their notice, which, with its attendant circumstances and improvement are thus narrated:—

"Friday, April 26, (1816).—An important week this. On Monday, Mr. Pocock erected his Tent on Gallows Field, and had service every night. Last night I preached to about 4000 people from Matt. xxiv. 44. This morning, at half-past nine o'clock, we began, and continued with exhortation, prayer, etc., till near twelve. A little after one o'clock, William Carter, condemned at our last assizes for uttering a *forged note*, was executed in the presence of at least 30,000 persons. In the afternoon the service was continued, and in the eveeing Mr.

Martin preached. Messrs. Pocock, Smith, Bond, H. Roberts, and myself, exhorted, prayed, etc. We had a glorious time. About 4000 were present; and after the greater part had dispersed, those who were labouring under convictions came inside the Tent, and we prayed with them. Oh! that the death of this poor criminal may be an instrument of life to many souls!"

"Sunday, April 28.—At half-past ten, prayed and exhorted at Gallows Field. In the afternoon, preached at Jacob's Well; and in the evening, with great freedom, preached at Gallows Field, from Heb. ii. 3. It is computed that 10,000 persons were present on this occasion.* Messrs. Pocock, Bond, and Smith assisted, and a solemn, convincing time was experienced by most of the people. present. Oh, that the fruit may be found, and the glory given to the name of the Lord! I thank God for the liberty I felt, and for the unction which attended the word. May it prove a savour of life unto life unto all who heard it. What an open door is set before us! May we work while it is called day."

In this way these devoted labourers pursued their work, "instant in season and out of season," while the way seemed to be gradually opening, for Mr. Pyer's more entire and exclusive consecration to a sphere of action, for which his amazing energy, strong constitution, powerful voice, and burning zeal, pre-eminently qualified him. His own feelings on the subject are thus portrayed:—

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* The published accounts say 15,000.

"June 24, 1817.—What various scenes I have passed through during my stay in this vale of tears. And how often—nay, how constantly—have I desired to be exclusively devoted to ministerial work, in order to be extensively useful. The way to it, both in England and abroad, has opened, and then very frequently closed; and here I am now, engaged in a work, and employed by God, in a way of which I had not the least idea until it came upon me. And if I may credit what I hear and see when engaged in the work, and what others tell me when out of it, I may conclude that I am more useful than perhaps I should be in any fixed, exclusive ministry whatever. I am burdensome to no man; I preach to more people, by thousands, than I could expect to preach to, in any fixed place of worship; and the multitudes awakened and brought to God since I have thus laboured, are truly astonishing, Oh! for a thankful, humble, devoted heart! Lord, give it, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

The death of the Princess Charlotte is thus alluded to:—

"Wednesday, Nov. 19, 1817.—The funeral day of the Princess Charlotte, who died Nov. 6, and who, on account of her amiable qualities, etc., is universally lamented and deplored. In obedience to an invitation, I went to Marlborough, and preached from Jer. xv. 9—'Her sun is gone down while it is yet day.'* I had considerable liberty, but found myself getting into oratorical eloquence, rather than speaking the simple truth—a fault of which I am too often guilty. The day altogether was very solemn. May it prove a lasting blessing to the land!"

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* The same words were selected by his friend, the Rev. Geo. Smith, for the funeral sermon of his beloved daughter, Elizabeth, just twenty years after, and are inscribed on the tablet erected to her memory.

SECTION II.

In 1818, during his residence at Newbury, we find him deploring the apathy of men in office—which happily in our day would hardly find a parallel.

"Friday, June 5.—So, after all my exertions to effect the object, it seems we shall have no missionary meeting, at least for the present. Mr. Benson and Mr. Watson have both written to excuse themselves, on account of the pressure of business; and because they cannot come, our friends (that is, Messrs. R., P., and H.) take the opportunity of laying it aside altogether. In the course of the discussion, some innuendos were thrown out concerning the inutility of extra exertion, Tent and field preaching, the extreme to which mission business was carried, etc., etc., which has tended to vex and grieve my very soul. Indeed, when I contrast Mr. Wesley's journals with the present apathy of preachers and people, I am pained exceedingly, and can only find consolation in repairing to the throne of grace. Lord, evermore save me from the fear of man!"

In the following month, we have an interesting description of a visit, with the Tent, to Southampton and the Isle of Wight.

"Saturday, July 11.—What a week this has been! A week of immense labour and toil—a week of infinite profit and pleasure. I got to Winchester late last Saturday night, and to Southampton early the following morning. At half-past ten, the Tent was filled with serious attentive hearers, and the Lord was eminently present in the midst of us. I preached from 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Mr. Pocock and Mr. Roberts exhorted and prayed. While singing, 'Now I have found the ground whereon,' etc., to a tune composed by a friend of ours now in glory, every heart seemed full. The sound was melody divine, and the whole so evidently accompanied by tokens of God's presence, that all were ready to exclaim, 'This is the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.' In the afternoon, our congregation was considerably increased. Mr. Pocock preached from, 'Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth.' This was also a very profitable opportunity. At six o'clock we had still more people, and as solemn, convincing a time as perhaps we ever had. My text was, 'For what shall it profit a man,' etc. Messrs. Weir, Roberts, and Pocock each exhorted and prayed; and we concluded the day, wondering at the great and glorious things we had heard and seen. Monday, we crossed to the Isle of Wight. Our passage was tedious, and the landing of our horses and luggage more so; insomuch that we did not reach Newport—a distance of eight miles from Cowes—till the time announced for preaching was almost expired. We had no time to put up the Tent. A huge multitude of all descriptions was assembled—many, indeed, apparently disposed to interrupt and disturb. We all felt much fatigued with the labours of the past day, and no one seemed either disposed or able to face the amazing concourse. The attention was fixed on me as the preacher; and, indeed, I had no particular objection, provided some one began. I urged Mr. Pocock, and he urged me. At length I stepped into the sociable, and gave out, 'Lo! God is here,' etc. Mr. P. prayed, and I addressed from Mark i. 15. About 2000 heard with attention; but many, particularly the military officers, who composed the skirts of the congregation, trifled all the time, while many more paraded the field at different distances, 'caring for none of these things.' We all felt uncomfortable; though it appears with our hearers it was widely different, as many have since testified. Tuesday, at eleven o'clock, we held a prayer-meeting in the chapel, purposely designing to entreat a blessing on our labours. The Lord was with us. In the evening, our most sanguine expectations were exceeded. We put up the Tent close to a large shed which stood in the field, and our congregation outnumbered the one assembled last night; and, blessed be God, their behaviour was very different. The military officers, at least some of them, stood aloof, and indulged their sneers; while many of them mingled with the truly serious congregation, and heard for themselves. Mr. Pocock preached from Mark xvi. 20, and preached so powerfully, as to prove that God's Spirit was immediately accompanying him. Just as he concluded, a gentle shower of rain came down, and drove off many of the triflers. I followed with an exhortation founded on 2 Cor. iv. 6, in the course of which I made many solemn appeals to the conscience for the truth of what was asserted. I appealed also to God's works of creation, providence, and grace—to the humiliation of God's beloved Son—to his suffering and death, etc.; and quoted from Milton, Addison, and others. And the Word of God was like peals of thunder, 'quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword.' Deep attention pervaded the whole assembly, and many who were observed to trifle before, were now arrested by the power of God. One whose heart wished to resist the truth, and who was caught by the aptitude of a quotation, 'wished that old Milton had never existed;' and an officer, leading away his companion, was heard to say, 'Ah! that's conscience. I can't stand that.' Mr. R. followed, and while giving out a hymn, was almost overpowered, especially by the concluding verse—

'Happy if, with my latest breath,
I may but gasp his name,
Preach Him to all, and cry in death,
Behold, behold the Lamb!'

The singing of this hymn was earnest and solemn, transporting and delightful beyond description—such as no language can command, such as God alone could give. Mr. W. followed with a few words, then prayed, and concluded. But, oh, how unwilling were the dear people to depart! Had it been prudent, I believe hundreds would gladly have stayed for hours, and continued blessing and praising the name of the Lord. Wednesday morning, at five o'clock, we had a meeting in the chapel—Mr. R. preached. About 250 present, and a good meeting. In the evening the Tent was in a lovely spot, commanding delightful views of sea and land, at Ryde. We had a very serious congregation; fewer, indeed, than we had at Newport, and yet almost enough to fill the Tent, and enough to exceed the most sanguine expectations of our friends who reside here. My text was, 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.' Mr. P. followed, and Mr. R. concluded. Thursday morning, at five o'clock, we had a good company, and a most blessed meeting in the chapel. I was pressed to preach; but absolutely refused, and persisted in my determination. Mr. P., therefore, did so, from Rev. xxii. 21. His remarks were peculiarly apposite and profitable, and in the conclusion, while singing some verses referring to the glories and felicities of paradise, we were sensibly touched, and could say, 'Lord, it is good to be here.' After breakfast we crossed over to Gosport, viewed the 'Queen Charlotte' man-of-war, and were greatly astonished and pleased. We dined at the India Arms, and found our repast refreshing and comfortable. Our party was too large to ride in the sociable. Three of us, therefore, walked and rode occasionally upon the Tent, in the cart. I had got seven miles before I was overtaken, and fearing we should not be at Southampton in time, I walked on three or four more; but by this means I was so excessively hot and fatigued, that I wanted nothing but rest. However, while getting a little tea, our friends came to inform us an immense multitude was assembled, and on all hands it was agreed I should preach. It was useless, I found, to remonstrate, at least without making things unpleasant. I therefore dragged my body down, and spoke as well as I could to the amazingly-large and deeply-serious congregation, from Col. i. 27, 28. Immediately I had done, I felt myself completely knocked up, and therefore left the field, took a little wine, and lay down upon some chairs for an hour, after which I was refreshed. Friday morning, at five o'clock, Mr. Toaze preached in the chapel to about 250 people; and after breakfast we left the beautiful town, and our kind friends, and came to Winchester. Several from Southampton accompanied us, and we had a blessed meeting in the chapel in the evening. Mr. Griffith began. I preached from 'Some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not.' Messrs. Pocock, Roberts, Moyes, and Griffith followed, and to each of us was given a word of exhortation or prayer. After supper I sat awhile with a friend, and at two o'clock in the morning started home. I arrived about seven, and, blessed be God, found all as well as when I left. And now, what shall I say? I have an evil of which to complain. In consequence of so much public labour, travelling, etc., I have had but little time for private devotion, and, indeed, after fagging so from day to day, I have had but little inclination. My mind, therefore, has not been so uniformly serious and devout as I could have wished, and as, doubtless, I should have found profitable. Lord, forgive me this thing also, and stir me up to holy diligence and steady perseverance, in the path of piety and truth!"

It can be no matter of surprise that such a confession should supplement a week of so much toil and public excitement. Some biographers would possibly have withheld it, lest the preceding honour of the zealous labourer should be tarnished; but as we make no pretence of depicting a *perfect* character, we prefer honestly giving the whole of his own statement. It foreshadows a danger, and may act as a beacon, to all who, from incessant pressure from *without*, are prone to, or at least stand in hazard of, neglecting the altar fire *within*.

Entering upon the fifth year of their itinerant labours—which had been so signally blessed, that invitations to new scenes of exertion and enterprise poured in upon the originators of the scheme from all quarters—it was suggested by a gentleman in Marlborough (who also promised pecuniary help) that their work should be more extensively and systematically sustained, by the employment of a missionary. None appeared so suited to the post as the subject of our annals; and, in accordance with this suggestion, early in 1819, proposals were made to him to dispose of his business, and give himself exclusively to the work. The remuneration offered was by no means a tempting bait; indeed, few men but those of a like generous and noble nature would have acquiesced so readily in proposals of such moderate and uncertain tenure. They were conveyed in a letter from his friend, Mr. Pocock, to Mr. G. of Marlborough, and were couched in the following terms:—

"With regard to the sum per annum, we think it ought not yet to be fixed; but we think, at any rate, circumstanced as Mr. Pyer would be (at least in these parts), that £100 would be much more than would be proper, and even more than he would desire. Mr. P. knows well the characters with whom he will more immediately have to do, and he knows that whatever he may require, or would express as his wish, would be cheerfully complied with; for we have that confidence in him, that nothing unreasonable on his part would be expected. . . . . We are persuaded that Mr. P.'s object is not wealth, and that he never would enrich himself by becoming a missionary, even though we were to allow him £100 per annum. No one must think, or have it to say, that such and such persons took Mr. P. out of a good business, and then did nothing for him. We do not engage to do anything for him further than this—that he never shall injure himself or be embarrassed by his missionary labours; and, moreover, a regular something which he may think right, in consideration of his dependencies, shall be secured to him."

Such was the precarious tenure of this new proposition, and the simplicity and purity of Mr. Pyer's motives are evidenced in the reception he gives them:—

"Now, what can I say? Is it not all I can expect or desire? It is. And shall I be clear in the sight of God if I refuse? I do not think I shall. As soon, therefore, as I meet with a customer for my present business, it shall go, and I will prepare myself, by the help of God, to take the field."

SECTION III.

He soon after made the necessary arrangements for the disposal of his business, placed his eldest daughter at a boarding-school kept by relatives of Mr. Pocock's, the two younger ones were committed to the care of their grand-parents, and he entered heartily upon a career, for which he had so long and ardently panted, and for which his talents and physical structure gave him peculiar adaptation. In Dursley and its immediate neighbourhood, a great revival took place this year through the labours of their newly-appointed Tent missionary and his coadjutors; so that in a few months 450 members were added to the Wesleyan Society in that district. Amongst these converts was a man of the name of Corneck, a notorious character, "being foremost in every brawl, and fighting with anybody upon the least provocation." He was so wrought upon by the power of the Word, that two friends were obliged to help him home. His whole cry was, "I'm lost!

I'm lost! I'm lost! Do pray for me." In the summer of this year (1819) Swansea and its neighbourhood were visited with the Tent, and its energetic supporters. Amongst those who warmly patronized their labours, and showed them hospitality at Neath, was an excellent Quaker, Elijah Waring, who, on parting, took Mr. Pyer by the hand, and, with tears in his eyes, observed, "I have one word to say to *thee;* I believe it is in the language of Moses—'The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.' He has given thee his grace, and a door of utterance. *Take care thou never be silent.* I was much pleased to hear thee this night, and I hope we shall meet again." Amongst his papers is an interesting letter from this good man, which, but for its length, we should like to have given entire. We extract portions which refer to the visit just noted. It bears date May 28th, 1820, about twelve months subsequent to this event, and is addressed—

"MY DEAR FRIENDS, GEORGE POCOCK AND JOHN PYER,—Amongst the pleasant and refreshing recollections of the way along which I have feebly travelled, as a pilgrim seeking a better country, I have often looked back with peculiar satisfaction, to the days wherein your Tent was pitched in our borders, and I heard within its curtains the 'voice of one crying in the wilderness'—a voice of warning and of love, testifying against sin, and proclaiming its gracious and universal remedy, 'Behold the Lamb of God.' The message of the gospel had never sounded more harmoniously in my ears; it never smote with more subduing emphasis on my heart, than when I heard it thus declared to some of the outcasts of the earth—men of Belial—who had never been glad when it was said unto them, 'Let us go up to the house of the Lord,' but who ran to hear this *new* thing, and found the hardness of their heart, melted and broken by that word which is as a 'fire and as a hammer' when urged in the Spirit of the Great Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, who was 'anointed to preach the gospel to the poor.' . . . . Though you turned into my house, but as wayfaring men, you left in my heart a memorial which cannot perish, because it is, as I trust, a portion of the immortal and imperishable fellowship of the gospel. . . . . For you, my dear friends, I earnestly covet a continuance and increase of the best gifts. May you be preserved in meekness, in long-suffering, with patience rejoicing in the truth, whatever discouragements may assail you. Might I presume to adopt the words of an apostle, I would add, 'And I pray that your love may abound more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment, that ye may approve things which are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God.' . . . . Pray send me the history of your Tent when published, and especially remember that my house and my field are open to you, should the leading of Divine providence again bring you this way.—Believe me to be truly your affectionate friend,

"ELIJAH WARING."

From Wales, Mr. Pyer and his ministerial associates returned to Gloucestershire, and were received in all directions with cordiality and gratitude. In Dursley, services were frequently held at five o'clock in the morning, attended, in some instances, by 500 people, and scarcely ever without signs of penitential grief and surrender of the heart to God. Passing through the streets they were "laid hold of by the hand, and pressed into house after house, to pray with the poor weeping penitents, or to rejoice with happy believers in Jesus."

Any of our readers familiar with the romantic scenery around Stroud and its vicinity, will easily recognize and enter into the following description. They had been requested to visit Nibley with the Tent, a village noted for its ignorance and wickedness :—

"As we approached the Tent," writes Mr. P., "we were almost overpowered by the beauty and grandeur of the scene. The Tent stood in the midst of a beautiful field, situated on the lowest slope of Hinchcomb Hill, which reared its majestic head immediately above us, covered to the very top with wood. The front of the Tent opened to the west, and commanded a most extensive and enchanting view of Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, South Wales, the Bristol Channel, etc. Within and without were about 2000 people, singing a hymn with such sweetness and energy as raised our fainting spirits, and gave us a token for good. Mr. Roberts exclaimed, 'Courage, my brother, here's a lovely sight. Now let us up to the help of the Lord.'"

Nor was the Master whom they served unmindful of his zealous, faithful labourers. Wherever they went, his Spirit seemed to accompany them, and scarcely a congregation was gathered, without some visible tokens of his presence being felt and witnessed. So many instances of powerful awakening are recorded, that a bare enumeration of them would be tedious. We can only give a few specimens:—

"In one instance we found a fine stout young man, who was awakened under the first sermon I preached at Nibley, but who had kept the matter to himself till now. He acknowledged that he came to the Tent designing to persecute us; but that God's power so laid hold upon him, he was obliged to give up his malicious designs, and to call on the name of the Lord. His wife has been seeking for some time past, and now rejoices in the blessed anticipation of being made, with her husband, a partaker of the great salvation.

"In another case, we found a poor woman, with four or five children, who never in all her life prayed with or for them, but who now appears determined to begin in good earnest. Three sisters, also, groaning for redemption in the blood of Jesus. I am informed by two of them who are married, that their husbands are, with themselves, earnestly inquiring their way to God."

"Saturday, September 25th.—I have concluded a week of as great labour as ever I had. The four last evenings I have preached in the Tent, and the three last mornings, at six o'clock, in the chapel, and have had each time increasing congregations. The evening services have been attended with great life and power, and the morning seasons have been times of much and general refreshing. Persons whose minds have been formerly filled with prejudice against us, have been found, not only mixing with our congregations, but hearing with the deepest attention. Some of the vilest characters in the village (Cowley) are truly awakened; and during the preachings, scores of persons of all sorts and descriptions have been bathed in tears while listening with avidity to all the words of this life. I have visited several sick and aged people, and many families, and have good reason to conclude my labours have not been in vain. A young man of vile conduct and character, was so affected on Thursday morning, that he could not leave the chapel without giving some account of his state, and entreating advice; and his mother, to whom he has been a source of great trouble, could not find words wherewith to express her extreme joy and gratitude, for the change which has taken place. The same evening a man and his wife, of notoriously bad conduct, left the Tent in tears, and besought one of our friends to desire me to pray for them at the chapel next morning, as the illness of a parent would prevent their being there. A young man who has been long seeking, found peace with God on Friday morning. A young woman, who for some time has been almost despairing of God's mercy, thinking she was too vile to be saved, was now also enabled to trust in the Lord; and another young woman, long halting between two opinions, was brought to decide upon the momentous question, and resolved to give her heart to God. But I cannot notice all the individual instances of awakening and conversion, or describe in adequate language the heartfelt joy and attachment of our dear friends, all of whom are very eager and pressing for another visit. Such are the present results of my feeble exertions in the cause of my adorable Saviour in this place. Surely I ought to sing, 'O Jesus! ride on till all are subdued.'"

On his birthday this year, he writes, December 3rd, "Never, perhaps, in my life did I see the impurity of my heart, the natural inconstancy and levity of my mind, more than I do now, and never was I more sensible of the want of a continued application of the blood of Jesus. Since my last birthday, I have laboured more extensively in the vineyard of the Lord than ever I did before, and have seen more evident fruits of my feeble efforts, than during any other period of my life. I have also had more close and sharp trials, and thus has God balanced the one against the other; and yet I can see little else but cause of complaint. My time passes without improvement in my own heart, and events which would draw some persons on with the swiftness of an eagle, pass over my head without any impulse, save that of a momentary impression. O God, when shall I be wise? When shall I make everything turn to good account? Surely when I am more serious, and when I converse more habitually with Thee. Lord, help me!"

The Sabbath following, he visited Shepherd's Pits—in the neighbourhood of Bristol—with several Bristol friends; and notwithstanding the advanced season of the year, services were held as usual in the Tent. In connection with this visit, a narrative is given respecting one of their early converts, which may possibly excite some interest. He writes:—"Mr. and Miss Pocock and myself had a cup of tea at Burchell's, and received from him such an account of the wonderful interpositions of Providence on his behalf, as filled us with astonishment. The first engagement he was in, was on board an English frigate. Two hundred and ninety of their men, were either killed or wounded; but he escaped unhurt. In another engagement, the ship in which he was, fought for nearly four hours, alongside a French man-of-war, and the greatest havoc was made—numbers having been killed all around him, while the hand of God kept him alive. In three other engagements, he witnessed the sparing mercy of God; and at length, when shipwrecked off Brest, and when, out of two hundred and four men, only thirty-five were saved, he was one. From thence he was taken to a French prison, where there were upwards of 9000 prisoners—English, Irish, and Scotch. Many were the encounters between the partisans of the different countries; and many died of the wounds thus received by their cudgels, but he always had the fortune to escape. Three distinct times he attempted to break from prison by scaling the walls, and each time was shot at by the sentry; but without taking effect. At length the prisoners combined together, and sprung a mine, carrying away the earth in their pockets and hats, and emptying it into the river which ran alongside the prison, by means of a hole in the wall. They had proceeded so far as to get to daylight, at the opposite end, and were all anticipating the certainty of being out in the course of the night, when one of the prisoners made known to the guard the whole affair. At this time, with three hundred others, he was in the mine; but his companion, having prepared some potatoes, called him to partake of them. Accordingly, he came, and, as he crossed the yard, met a company of soldiers. He now expected to be taken; but they let him pass on while they went to the mine, discovered the plan, and continued to fire upon the men, till the whole three hundred were killed. At this time, however, there was no fear of God before his eyes. They had a clergyman in the prison; but he never attended his instructions. A spirit of infidelity prevailed among the prisoners, into which he drank; insomuch that, being extremely ignorant, he concluded that, when a man died, his soul departed as smoke out of a chimney, and that he had no more sins to answer for than a horse. At the Peace, he returned home, and obtained employment in a coal-pit. Here he sinned on, in no ordinary way. He used to delight in coining new oaths; and when going up and down the pit, if the men with him did not give him room, or in any other way displeased him, he would curse so horribly, as to shock even the wickedest of them. At length he married, and was led by his wife to hear the Word of God. In her presence he never swore; but out of it was as bad as ever, till last Sunday night, when his heart was effectually laid hold of; and now he waters his couch with his tears, and thinks, in the bitterness of his distress, he is too vile to be pardoned. After hearing this tale of hair-breadth escapes, and having a little prayer, we went up to the Tent, and found a goodly number were gathered together, and a universal blessing rested on them all."

A remarkable instance of the power of conscience which Mr. Pyer was wont to relate with graphic effect, is thus noted in his diary. The circumstance occurred in the neighbourhood of the Collieries, where their labours had been most signally blessed.

"Jan. 13, 1820.—To-day we learnt the following particulars: A man residing in this neighbourhood, remarkable for nothing but ignorance and wickedness, was visiting some of his relations on the 26th of December, the last day the Tent was used here, who endeavoured to persuade him to come to our closing meeting; but finding their entreaties prevailed nothing, one of them asked if he would go, provided any person would give him a sum of money. He answered, 'Yes, he would do anything for money.' 'Would he go for a shilling?' 'Yes.' 'Would he go for a meal of victuals?' 'Yes.' 'Then I'll give you one.' A loaf was then broken in two, and one half of it, with some butter and cheese, was deposited at a cottage near the Tent; it being understood that the man was to have it immediately the service was over. This being done, the man came to the Tent. My sermon being founded upon—'The end of all things is at end,' etc., turned a good deal upon the future judgment, and made way for some remarks from Mr. Pocock, in the course of which, he described the Judge descending, the judgment set, and the books opened; and then remarking that every work, and every secret thing, would then be exposed, he exclaimed, 'Who was it that at such a time opened his neighbour's potato-pit, and deprived a poor family of their stock of winter's provisions? There he is, bring him forward. What, is that he?' etc., etc. Conscience now smote this man. He had been guilty of this very crime, and filled with alarm, he went home without his victuals. The next morning, he went to the woman whose potato-pit he had robbed, and confessed his crime, adding, 'Mr. Pocock wouldn't ha knawed I, but my hankercher weren't tied like anybody else's.' What is specially remarkable in this case is, that Mr. Pocock knew nothing of the man, nor had he ever heard of such a circumstance as a potato-pit being opened and robbed in the neighbourhood; but he simply hit upon the observation as involving a general thing, without the slightest idea of any individual case. Surely there was something more than chance in all this. Who can tell but this very occurrence saved this poor fellow from the gallows?"

We may just note, in passing, the following entry respecting the change or succession in the monarchy:—

"Thursday, Feb. 3, 1820.—To-day I witnessed the ceremony of declaring the demise of his late Majesty, George III., and the proclamation of his present Majesty, George IV.; all public business was suspended, the streets were thronged with an immense multitude, so that the London mail was obliged to proceed by the back, King Street, Marsh Street, and Clare Street. There was little appearance of enthusiasm, nothing beyond the common gladness of a holiday. Though there could not have been fewer than 80,000 or 100,000 persons in Queen Square; yet the huzzas at the close of the proclamation were confined to a few hundreds, who more immediately surrounded the car. I certainly hope that the length and prosperity of his Majesty's reign will make up for this want of popularity on his accession."

But to return to scenes more congenial with Mr. Pyer's hopes and aspirations. About this time, in the prosecution of his labours, we find him suffering from a severe cold, which brought on an attack of fever, and for some eleven or twelve days laid him aside from active life. He was no loiterer, however, and we soon find him again at his loved employ. Visiting some kind friends in Marlborough, partly to recruit his strength, he goes from village to village in the vicinity, proclaiming a Saviour's love and pity for lost sinners. On one occasion, after preaching at Winterbourne and Lockeridge, he writes: "I went to church, and had my spirit moved within me; not indeed with the evangelical nature of the discourse; but with sincerest pity for the poor dear people, who, not having been privileged with a better gospel than that I heard, are perishing for lack of knowledge. I longed most ardently for an opportunity of declaring, in the churchyard, or some adjacent spot, the plain way of salvation by faith, and should certainly have done so, had the weather permitted. I felt my whole soul burn within me, for the salvation of these wandering sheep, and under this influence I endeavoured at Lockeridge, fully to deliver my own soul. I trust the Word so well received will not be in vain." The following day, Monday, February 28, he was at another village, Thornhill, and writes:—

"At half-past six the chapel was well filled, and with the Word down came the blessing. Many were filled with strange amazement, and others, I doubt not, with deep conviction. I calculate upon this being a night of salvation to many precious souls. Oh! for more zeal, more fervid piety, more universal charity. I want to be holy—I want to be useful. May these two objects employ all my time and thoughts, from day to day, till time with me shall be no more." The next two days he suffered severely from pain in his face—the result of cold taken on the previous Sabbath in riding from place to place in a high and cold wind.

On Friday, March 3, he writes: "My time passes here very pleasantly. I have everything I can possibly desire; kind friends, who pay me every affectionate attention, plenty of books, a parlour to myself, nothing to interrupt me; in fact, outwardly, nothing but enjoyment. I begin to love it, but the paradise, however enchanting, will not do for me. I can *taste* its pleasures, but my powers of body and mind, will not allow me to rest in enjoyments such as these. I must be up and doing. I must work, the night cometh, and God be merciful to me; already I have been too idle. Mr. G., Miss H., and several other friends, went with me to Ruchely this evening. Our meeting was simple and lively; just such as I conceive it ought to be among villagers, who have need to hear plain truth, in a plain and familiar way, that they may become wise to salvation. A blessed unction rested on us, and I hope good was done."

The next day brought him delightful intelligence respecting a service already noticed—"Just such news as I expected. Mr. A. writes me from Thornhill as follows:—'I bless God that He gave you a desire to come to Thornhill. I believe three, if not four persons, will bless God to all eternity that they heard you preach last Monday. Two men from Rushton sent for me to come over to them, for they were so distressed in mind, they could not tell what to do with themselves. A young girl about fourteen years of age, on Wednesday evening, at our prayer-meeting, poured out her soul to God with all her might. I believe the Lord is about to do a great work in our neighbourhood; the greatest part of the people in our parish seem to be concerned about their souls. Dear brother, you must come down to us again and again. Consider how many poor perishing souls are here, who never heard the gospel in its purity.' "

On the following Sabbath (March 5) he was engaged in two or three village services, and thus notes a pleasing little incident:—"As I walked to the afternoon service, a decently-dressed man overtook me, and, after conversing awhile, took out his hymn-book, pointed to the forty-fifth page, and said, 'When you preached in the Tent in yonder meadow, you gave out this hymn; that was the cause of my buying the book, and, I hope, the beginning of good days to my soul.' " This interesting fact reminds us of an observation made by a member of his church only a few months before his death—viz., that a friend belonging to another denomination, one day remarking upon the peculiar pathos and power Mr. Pyer threw into this part of Divine worship, said, "If you want to hear a hymn well given out, you must go to Wycliffe;" and it was the frequent practice of this individual, on returning from his own place of worship, to visit ours, merely for the enjoyment of the closing exercises. Similar remarks have frequently been made relative to his reading the Scriptures; and we believe the secret of it all was, simply the entireness with which his whole soul grasped the truth itself, and then endeavoured to infix it permanently on the hearts of his audience. We return to his journal.

"Sunday, March 12.—My congregation at Winterbourne this morning filled every part of the house, and all listened with deep attention to the truth of

God. Several of them walked over to Thornhill, and, with the people from Broad Hinton, Rushton, etc., etc., formed such a company as has not been seen in the chapel for some time. The deepest solemnity sat on every face; all seemed to remember the gracious season we enjoyed together when I was last here, and every one appeared eager to catch the word. I spoke from the jailor's inquiry and the apostle's answer, enforcing the question with all the energy of which I was capable. The Lord, by his Holy Spirit, condescended to apply the word, so that four-fifths of the congregation were in tears. Many endeavoured to hide their faces, but in vain; tear after tear rolled on, for the rock was smitten—not, indeed, by the rod of Moses, but by the eternal truth of God. I do not wonder that the gospel is compared to a hammer, a fire, a two-edged sword, when I see such effects produced by it, as I was permitted to witness this blessed afternoon. Oh! I trust that many will begin from this day, to set out in earnest for the kingdom of God. At six o'clock I preached at Wootton Bassett to a small company of people, left as sheep without a shepherd, not having had any preaching for some time. The business of the election seems to engage every person's attention here, and in general the town is full of darkness and vice; yet I doubt not the time of its merciful visitation is at hand. Nothing is wanting but more labourers. Lord, raise them up and send them forth. On our return to Thornhill, we heard that three persons, deeply affected by the word this afternoon, had joined the society after the evening preaching, and that eight or ten others professed to be awakened during the same service. May the number be speedily increased, and may I yet be encouraged to labour more abundantly!"

We have already had occasion to allude to Mr. Pyer's striking and appropriate method of reading in public worship. His earnestness and fervency in prayer, more particularly on special occasions, were also very remarkable; and even at this early period seem to have been a noticeable feature in his ministrations.

On Friday, July 21, 1820, the foundation of a chapel was laid in Dursley, as the result of the Tent preaching; and the event is thus recorded:—

"This day will be remembered by hundreds of precious souls, through time and eternity. By one o'clock Mr. Pocock and I arrived at Dursley, and after dinner, we sung, and prayed, and preached in the Tent, which was well filled with people of different ranks and descriptions. After this service, tea and refreshments were served up to about 300 persons, and at six o'clock we laid the foundation-stone of our new chapel, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. When the ceremony was over, I stood on the stone and gave out a hymn, and then offered up the desires of the people in prayer to God. At first I had but little liberty, and owing to my state of lassitude and weakness, did not feel much inclination to proceed beyond five or six minutes; but, while engaged in supplication, the power of God came upon me in such a remarkable manner, that I could do nothing but go on. Our first visit to Dursley, in the opposite field; the text I preached from; the outpouring of the Spirit which then and subsequently took place; the numbers now surrounding us who were the fruits of my ministry; the state of the people who should hereafter hear God's word in the building about to be erected; the men who might be called of God to preach that word; the infant state of our cause; the meanness and feebleness of the instruments, now engaged in carrying on the work; the presence of the Holy Trinity; the observance of angels, of devils, and of the hundreds of precious souls wherewith we stood surrounded, were circumstances brought in such swift succession to my mind, and applied by the Holy Spirit with such power to my heart, that all my energies of body and soul, were drawn out to God in earnest supplications, not for five or six, but for forty or fifty minutes. The responses of the multitude were loud and earnest; their tears copious and universal. The stillness of midnight prevailed; an awful silence pervaded the place, such as perhaps the everlasting hills, at the foot of which we stood, had never before witnessed, and such as we shall seldom see again, until we all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. After this solemn waiting upon the holy, heart-searching God, Mr. Pocock gave a short address; and then we adjourned to the Tent, where I preached with considerable comfort and some enlargement of heart. Mr. P. closed with suitable advice, prayer, singing, etc."

Visiing the town a few weeks later, he writes:—

"Both yesterday and to-day, I have heard of the blessing communicated by the great Head of the Church, under the prayer He enabled me to offer, over the foundation-stone of the chapel. Some, it appears, were there awakened to a sense of their lost estate and condition; some others encouraged to seek the Lord; the souls of God's people abundantly refreshed, and altogether such a general interest excited, that I have had many applications to *print* the prayer!! Ah! who can tell but the Holy Spirit himself, whose influence produced both thoughts and words, what was then said. All that I know of it is, that my own soul was drawn out with unusual fervour, and that He gave me such ideas and language, as was not to be commanded by any human effort, however powerful and energetic it might be. To God be all the glory."

As we have already intimated, the foregoing extracts are but *samples* of the labours and successes of this honoured servant of the Lord and his cordial fellow-labourers. Hitherto, they had been working in conjunction with the old Methodist Society, to which they belonged; but about this time the popularity they had acquired, began to excite certain jealousies and prejudices, which ultimately led to their expulsion from the Society, and to the formation of a new one, under the title of "Tent Methodists." It is scarcely necessary, nor will our space admit, to enter into detail upon this matter. Most, if not all the parties, who took a prominent part in those disturbances, have long since passed to a juster tribunal than can be found on earth, and we have no wish to cast censorious reflections upon their memory. The circumstances of the case were made public at the time of their occurrence, in a published pamphlet, and also in the pages of the "Tent Methodist Magazine." From these documents it is easy to perceive, that the burden of complaint was the *irregularity* of their proceedings, according to Methodist rule.

Notwithstanding these unhappy differences and their issue, Mr. Pyer continued through life to enjoy the friendship of many of his Wesleyan brethren; and it was a somewhat remarkable coincidence, that at the time of his death, one who had been associated with him at Newbury, was filling his appointment in the Devonport Circuit, and took part in the funeral services. We allude to the venerable Mr. Geden.

The matters in dispute relating to the Tent Itinerancy, were at length brought before a Committee, specially appointed at their quarterly meeting, to negotiate with the Tent Committee, and the following resolutions were ultimately passed:—

"I. That the Tents shall not go into any circuit without the consent of the Superintendent; their movements and times of service also to be under his direction.

"II. That no person shall be employed to preach in the Tents, but duly accredited Methodist preachers.

"III. That all persons 'brought to the knowledge of the truth,' during the services in the Tents, shall be advised to join the Methodist Society without delay."

The friends of the Tent were aware how much they were giving up, by the above resolutions; but for the sake of peace they submitted, and the close of the meeting happily exhibited the return of good-will and harmony.

This harmony was, however, but of short duration. The following month, another of the most zealous and efficient Tent preachers was expelled, on a groundless charge, of having prevailed on one of their members to join the New Connexion Methodists; and Mr. S.'s expulsion was soon followed by that of Mr. Pocock, the more prominent leader of this new form of itinerant evangelization.

The circumstances of his case were rather different. Their success with the Tent in various localities, during the summer months, led to the desire for more sheltered accommodation for the winter. Mr. Pocock was applied to, and his brethren concurring with the people, in the expediency of the object, subscriptions were entered into, and Mr. P. made himself responsible for the erection of the chapels. It can be no matter of surprise, from the course pursued towards them, that Mr. P. should determine that "whatever chapel he should build, or have the disposal of, should never be settled upon principles so narrow and contracted, as those prescribed by what is called the Conference plan." This would at once have excluded from their pulpits some of his best friends and coadjutors. This determination, as will be readily believed, gave mighty offence, and led at once to his expulsion; but the people who had been gathered, by their instrumentality, from a vain and sinful world, nobly rallied round their persecuted leaders, and henceforth formed a distinct community, under the designation of Tent Methodists.

Having been thus led, by the force of circumstances, into their new position, it is more than probable, they were destitute of those elements of strength, which insure longevity. We cannot help suspecting, that one of the main causes of their want of solidity and permanency lay in this, that authority was too largely vested in *one* individual, who, with all his excellences (and they were many), was yet considered *impulsive*, and at times somewhat capricious. Moreover, too little regard was paid to the education of their preachers; hence their day of action, though splendid as a meteor's flash, was of almost as short duration. Yet who can read the glowing details of their simple and unwearied labours, or observe the crowds, who listened with breathless attention to their burning words, and the many scores who were pricked in their hearts, but must acknowledge that their "counsel and their work were of God." Eternity alone, can reveal how large was the number, out of those forlorn and neglected multitudes, that were thus gathered as wandering and lost sheep, into the everlasting fold.

Having given this brief sketch of the origin of Tent Methodism, so necessary to the development of the character and career of our beloved relative, we will return, in the next chapter, to his own unstudied narration of events, as they stand connected with his more distinctive appellation—a Tent Methodist Missionary.

CHAPTER IV.

MISSIONARY LABOURS—CHANGE OF THEOLOGICAL VIEWS.

"Paul's love of Christ and steadiness unbribed,
Were copied close in him, and well transcribed.
He followed Paul; his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same."

COWPER.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

PAUL.

SECTION I.

FREE and unfettered as these evangelists now felt, they seem to have laboured on with increased energy and zeal. Not only in the villages and outskirts of their native city, but even within its borders, were they day by day warning sinners of the "wrath to come." On the quays, and on board ship, the generous-hearted, but too often thoughtless sailor was powerfully appealed to; and on the occasion of an annual fair being held (strange to say, in a portion of St. James's Churchyard), they seized the opportunity of arresting, if possible, the attention of the giddy multitude. We furnish a specimen from Mr. Pyer's journal:—

"Sunday, Sept. 10, 1820.—My body is completely worn out and exhausted by the excessive labour of this day; but my soul exults and triumphs, in expectation of that all-glorious period, when I shall be called to rest from my labours, and to enjoy in paradise, uninterrupted and eternal communion with my God. At seven this morning we had a happy season at the Pithay; immediately this was closed, we went out into the midst of the fair. Mr. Pocock gave out a hymn and prayed, and I preached. One of the showmen sent to offer us the use of his stage to preach from, but I preferred standing on a bench, brought by some kind friends for the purpose. Many persons of different descriptions were gathered around us, and all heard with deep and serious attention. At some distance a group of men, evidently Yorkshire clothiers, got together, and seemed too much engaged in trifling conversation to lend us their ears. I hinted at the impropriety of their behaviour, and was pleased to observe some of them draw up and mingle with the congregation, while the rest quietly dispersed. Almost as soon as I commenced my discourse, St. James's bells began to ring, and continued to do so, with very few interruptions, during the whole service. Blessed be God, however, He strengthened my voice, so that every one could hear distinctly, whether immediately surrounding me or lounging at a distance; and all through my sermon the greatest order and solemnity prevailed. In giving out the last hymn, I made a pause before we sung 'See the suffering God appears,' etc., and remarked upon the goodness of God in exhibiting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, when men hardened their hearts against his Word and Spirit. These remarks drew tears from many eyes, and seems to confirm the opinion, that nothing is so calculated to fix the attention of poor sinners, as the cross of Christ. At half-past ten I preached in the Pithay. Many who heard me in the fair were present, and upon the whole service the good Lord sent down his blessing. At half-past two and quarter before six I took my stand, accompanied by Mr. Pocock, on board the packet, at the Drawbridge. The congregations to-day outnumbered by far those of the preceding Sabbath, especially in the evening, when I scarcely ever beheld a more imposing sight. The decks of the different vessels were completely covered with people; upon the quay, for a considerable distance down, they stood eight or ten deep; and from thence, all around the footway over the bridge, and for a great distance up St. Augustine's Back, hundreds stood and listened with deep and fixed attention. Many of the inhabitants, both on the quay and on St. Augustine's Back, threw up their windows, and sat in them; and God so strengthened my voice, that I believe all could readily hear. When the gas was lit up, and discovered the whole of the multitude, the scene was truly sublime; and having the help of our singers from Kingswood, the singing was enchanting. Glory be to God for this happy, blessed hour. If we take into account the numbers who heard part of my discourse, and the multitude who stood the whole time, there must have been perhaps from 10,000 to 12,000 to whom I spoke in the name of the Lord. And shall no good come of this? Lord, lay to thy hand."

Towards the close of the same year (1820), some friends in London having heard of these Bristolian labourers, and being anxiously concerned for the poor of the metropolis, invited them thither. Arrangements were made for Mr. Pyer to pay them a visit, near the end of November. Two days after his arrival, we find him accompanying his friends to a place near Shoreditch Church, called Cooper's Gardens, to lay the foundation-stone of a Sabbath schoolroom. His description of the poverty and wretchedness of the people and their dwellings, would hardly be credited in this more advanced age; yet it may be well to take a peep, at what this part of London was forty years ago.

"As well as I could judge, there are about three or four acres of ground, covered with about 500 or 600 huts and hovels of every description. Very few have anything more than a ground floor, and with many the whole apartment consists of one room, from eight to ten feet square, serving as a place of residence and rest for two, three, four, or, in some cases, five or six human beings. I looked into several. In one I beheld a poor emaciated creature, habited as a woman, who appeared to be abandoned by everything but misery and disease. In another, a woman, with two or three half-naked children; and in a third, five or six little urchins, with more filth than clothes upon them, etc., etc. Everything within and without appeared to be in the last stage of its existence; and in one view, it appeared to me it would be a blessing to the neighbourhood if the whole were set on fire, and, but for the souls of the people, a mercy if death would take them away at a stroke. I am informed that one half of the inhabitants are prostitutes, another fourth pickpockets, and the remainder the lowest and most abject of the poor; and yet what is amazing, this property is so valuable and productive, that the present proprietor has been offered upwards of £20,000 for it! When we had finished our reconnoitre, and returned to the ground, the Sabbath-school children came forward and sung a hymn. This drew forth many of the poor wretches from their abodes, who were differently attired, many in rags, and most of them wanting one or more articles of dress. The greatest difficulty I now found was what to say—even to preach the gospel to them seemed like an attempt at burlesque; for the vacant stare of some, and the sneering buffoonery of others, convinced me they were not as yet prepared for these glad tidings. I therefore began by pitying their misery, and pointing out to them the neglected, forlorn state of thousands of poor in every part of this great metropolis. This had the usual effect. They grew more calm and serious, and then I added a word or two upon the value of the soul and necessity of salvation. After this address, we sung a hymn, and I prayed. The children sung another hymn, and so concluded our part of the ceremony. One effect of the scene was visible in a moment. Some one happening to say a word against it, some half-dozen women so zealously espoused our cause, that their tongues were let loose in an instant, and blows would no doubt have succeeded to words, if the opposing party had not shown himself vanquished. Whether any consequences more blessed than these will follow, God only knows. He can 'from these stones raise up children unto Abraham,' and if He breathe upon the 'dry bones, they shall live.'"

November 29.—He notes an incident of political interest belonging to the past:—

"Saw the Queen go to and return from St. Paul's, and I was going to add, was gratified by the sight; but such pageantry has little charm for me. I never saw such multitudes of people together upon one occasion before. It was calculated 700,000, and certainly I never heard such bursts of joy. Opposite Carlton House, the roar increased in a tenfold degree, while the yellings, groanings, and hissings, which alternately responded to the huzzas, were truly deafening. It had such an effect upon my head, that I was glad to seek repose in some quieter part."

We select our next extract, as illustrative of the happy manner in which Mr. Pyer would frequently arrest attention, and burn an appeal into the very soul of his hearer. He occasionally indulged in the same practice in later life, and invariably with much effect:—

"Monday, December 4.—To-day I had to close my visit to London, and part with my dear and valued friends. At seven I preached at Webb Square, and as the people were aware it was my last opportunity with them, the place was well filled."

He addressed them from the last verse in the New Testament; and after defining his method of treating the subject, he goes on to say—

"At the close of the service, I gave out part of the hymn beginning, 'And let our bodies part,' etc., and when we came to—

> 'Oh! happy, happy place,
> Where saints and angels meet,
> There we shall see each other's face,'

I made a full stop, and asked, And will it be so? If you, my brethren, have the happiness to arrive safe at last, will you see there the man who now addresses you? And God being my helper, and keeping me in my present frame of mind, I *shall* be there; but, my friends, shall I meet you there? What, all of you? Will not one be missing? Shall I, then, see the aged and the young, preachers, and society, and congregations? Brethren, I beseech you, meet me at the right hand of God. Oh! that in that day we may all be found possessed of *this* grace, and enjoying *that* glory! Floods of tears accompanied the delivery of these appeals, and when I came to a close, and all responded 'Amen,' the sensation was too weighty for some, who sat down, freely indulging their tears, and it was with difficulty any of us sung the remaining verses."

Our next extract shows his tenderness of conscience, and may act as a salutary admonition to others placed in similar circumstances. It occurred in the old coach days, on his way home from London to Bristol:—

"My conscience condemns me for omitting to reprove one of the coachmen for swearing. Independent of this, I enjoy great peace, and in this respect I pray God to make me more faithful upon every future occasion."

January 28, 1821.—We find him at Dursley preaching a sermon for poor Robert Trotman, who was, says he, "indeed a brand plucked out from the burning." When the Tent first came to Dursley, he was a notorious drunkard, Sabbath-breaker, and blasphemer. He had been a sergeant in the army for thirty years, where he contracted the most diabolical habits of sin, and since his discharge, had lived in open violation of all the laws of God. He was persuaded by his wife to come and hear the preaching in the Tent. The word came with power to his heart; he was soundly converted, and after a painful affliction of many months, during which he manifested the most exemplary patience, he departed, triumphing in a Saviour's love. The chapel was crowded in every part, and scores were obliged to retire for want of room; and God so helped me by his grace and Spirit, that in singing, praying, and preaching we occupied more than three hours. Will any good come of this?"

The following Tuesday he again preached in the same place, and says:—"Many Dissenters were there, and, according to the opinion of my friends, I preached the best sermon to-night that I ever preached. Lord, keep me from the foot of pride."

Adding the next day—"The news of my last night's sermon appears to have spread all over the town. I hear of it in every quarter. Lord, what can save me from destruction? Nothing but thy mighty power. Be Thou my Rock and my Refuge!"

On the 13th of April, 1821, an execution took place in Bristol of a very affecting kind. The young man, only eighteen years of age, was found guilty of murder, having thrown a stone at a young girl with whom he had been long associated, from the effects of which she died, after lingering three weeks in the infirmary. The circumstances of the case excited great interest and compassion, as his parents and some other branches of the family were honest, God-fearing people, and his mother had been a member of the Wesleyan Society fourteen years. Young Horwood was visited constantly after his condemnation by Mr. Roberts (the Baptist minister) and the jail chaplain, together with Mr. Hall, Mr. Pocock, and Mr. Pyer, and the result of their varied appeals, exhortations, and prayers with the poor criminal, were of the most satisfactory kind. There can be no doubt, from the facts embodied in a small pamphlet published at the time, that John Horwood found mercy of the Lord, even like the dying thief, at the eleventh hour. Upon Mr. Pyer's admission to his cell, he was much affected and surprised to find that the "faces of the father, mother, and brothers of the criminal were well known to him, having often seen them at the Tent, when erected on Jeffries Hill and Troopers' Hill. By the brother he was informed, "that he was awakened to a sense of his state as a sinner, when hearing the gospel at the Tent on Troopers' Hill five years ago, and that he had been a member of the Methodist Society ever since, and that his unhappy brother had often heard me preach."

It cannot be supposed an event so solemn and affecting would pass unnoticed. On Sabbath Day, April 15, Mr. Pyer writes:—

"Last night we got some hymns printed on the occasion of Horwood's execution, and this morning erected both Tents on Jeffries Hill. As the appointed time of service drew on, people were seen flocking in all directions to the spot, and when we commenced our worship, 1500 or 1600 were present. Mr. Pocock opened the service by singing part of the hymn 'O God, our help in ages past,' and then read the 90th Psalm. I afterwards read part of the 23rd of Luke, and then we sang one of the hymns written for the occasion. I read the hymn through before we sang it, and the effect produced was instantly visible—tears flowed abundantly, and many could not possibly sing those verses, in which Horwood's language was embodied and made use of, in warning others against the sins into which he had fallen. We got through as well as we could. Mr. Pocock then prayed, and afterwards preached, in a very impressive and affecting manner, from Ezek. iii. 17—19. In the afternoon the crowd was immense—not less than 10,000 persons were crowded within and around the Tents, to whom Mr. Roberts preached a plain, useful sermon, and gave some account of poor Horwood. Though the company was so large, the greatest seriousness prevailed, and I would fain hope that much good will follow. Just as the service closed, a very heavy shower of hail fell, and covered the ground to the depth of some inches. Much confusion now ensued; for the people pressed on every hand, to get under the shelter of the Tents, insomuch that the greatest exertions were necessary, to prevent their trampling upon one another. Added to this, Mr. S. Prust, who had come out with Mr. R., and had brought with him many hundreds of religious tracts, attempted to distribute them at the close of the service; and so eager was the multitude to receive them, that the 'Sociable' was nearly upset, and many people would, no doubt, have been severely injured, had we not prevailed on Mr. P. to discontinue the distribution for the present. During the interval of worship, many were employed in clearing away the dirt and wet occasioned by the hail. This being accomplished, and the ground well covered with clean, dry straw, at six o'clock we again commenced our service; and notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the weather, and the uncomfortableness of the roads, about 2300 persons were present. I preached from Rom. vi. 23, the passage which occurred to my mind when in Horwood's cell, when he said, 'Go, and tell my wicked companions their sins will bring them to death, as my sins have brought me.' During the delivery of the Word, the influence of God's Holy Spirit was felt among the people, and some were obliged to cry out under the poignancy of deep convictions; but when Mr. Hall gave an account of his interview with Horwood, the day before his execution (at which time his father, mother, brother, sister, and friends, took their last leave of him), the whole congregation was convulsed with sobs and tears. I never remember anything like it. The whole scene which took place in the jail, was, with inimitable simplicity, brought before us, and the unusual effect which followed, was such as art, or eloquence, or the most energetic appeal to the passions, I believe, never yet produced. Mr. Prust and Mr. Pocock exhorted, Mr. Smith prayed, and to each of us was given a suitable word, by Him who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and can make 'all things work together for good.' Surely this night will be remembered by many, when days and nights are fled for ever !"

"Wednesday, April 18.—We had published on Sunday to speak of Horwood at the Pithay this evening. A few minutes after six o'clock, word was brought that the chapel was full, and hundreds without, waiting in vain for admission. We hastened down, and found such a scene as language fails to describe. We tried at the usual entrance to force a passage; but in vain. At length we got admitted at the side door, and forcing our way through the crowd, succeeded in reaching the platform. It was a long while before order was fully restored, so many were yet surrounding the doors and windows; while those within the chapel were in many parts nearly pressed to death. After a time Brother S. made his appearance, when I requested him to preach outside. He did so, and, taking his stand in All-Saints' Street, addressed above 2000, in the name of the Lord. We now had peace within doors; and the Lord affording me help, I declared the Word in the best manner I could, the people continuing to hear with much seriousness. After the sermon, Mr. H. and myself gave an account of Horwood, the delivery of which excited strong feelings of sympathy, and will, I hope be followed with great good to many precious souls."

Supplementary to these stirring and gracious results, which followed poor John Horwood's execution, we cannot withhold information which has reached us, and which may be new to many of our readers—viz., that the present beautiful structure, "Highbury Chapel," stands either upon the identical site, or in the immediate vicinity of these transactions, then known as the "Gallows Field."

Our next extract depicts a scene of somewhat strange complexion, at least to individuals but little acquainted with Methodism. Serious objections to such exercises exist in many minds, and we believe, later in life, the subject of these annals, to some extent sympathized with such; but we feel tempted to give this one specimen from his diary, inasmuch as it brings before us a spot, endeared by many years of almost infantile association, and even to strangers may not prove an unwelcome record. About five miles from Bristol, between the villages of Downend and Frenchay, Mr. Pocock's two eldest daughters conducted an Establishment for the education of young ladies. The house was beautifully situated in the midst of extensive shrubberies, with a wide-spread lawn in front, skirted by a luxuriant wood, hence its name Cleve Wood. At this place, on Easter Monday, 1821, a fellowship meeting for the district had been appointed. The events of the day are thus graphically described :—

"Monday, April 23.—Early this morning we were all in motion, preparing for our excursion to Cleve Wood. Every horse and carriage was put into requisition, and as we journeyed we overtook pedestrians of all classes, bending their course towards the destined spot. By ten o'clock our Tents were erected, and the necessary accommodations prepared for our meeting. Numbers of persons were still coming from Bristol, Bath, Frampton, Coal-pit Heath, Wootton, Dursley, etc. About eleven we began, and continued singing and praying till one o'clock. We then broke up for dinner, and at two, commenced our fellowship meeting. Immediately our friends had liberty to speak, they began to declare in a very lively manner, what the Lord had done for their souls. Every testimony was weighty, solid, and judicious; and so desperately wicked had many been, who now bore witness for God, that we were constrained exceedingly to glorify the riches of Divine mercy, and to triumph in the Lord Jehovah, who had so abundantly displayed his saving power. We occasionally interspersed a few observations, and a little singing and prayer; but this was not done easily, owing to the eagerness of the dear people in speaking; and at length, when tea-time drew on, we were obliged to make several distinct efforts, before we could conclude. About 600 took tea, which was served up with the greatest order, and was received with mutual expressions of joy and gladness on every hand. At six we again commenced our service; and as there appeared such a disposition on the part of the people, to go on declaring the goodness of God, we left them at liberty to do so, and gave up the idea of preaching. Consequently several other blessed testimonies, were added to those delivered in the afternoon, and the most lively and joyous sensations appeared to run through the assembly. While we were thus enjoying the presence and salvation of the Lord under the canvas, several of our brethren devoted their attention to many who were penitently seeking mercy. These were taken into one of the parlours, where a prayer-meeting was held; and several were there enabled to rejoice in God's salvation. This meeting certainly exceeded every other of the kind we have enjoyed, and will, I trust, issue in the everlasting salvation of many precious souls. We returned home about ten o'clock, glorifying God for the great things we had heard and seen. Blessed be his holy name for ever and ever. Amen."

SECTION II.

Shortly after this, another visit was paid to London, and, for the *first* time, the Tent erected in some of its morally-barren wastes. Similar results followed, to those already depicted in other parts of the kingdom; but we must content ourselves with only one or two interesting facts. The cordiality of the people on all hands was universal; "hundreds pressed upon them to shake hands, and wish them success in the name of the Lord, so that it was with difficulty, they could tear themselves away from congregations counted by thousands." Upon one occasion Mr. Pyer writes—

"When the Tent was taken down, and carried over to the chapel, a young man of interesting appearance, who had waited for an opportunity to speak to me, came up and informed me that he had been a most determined infidel; but that, while I was preaching the first Sabbath evening, the Lord in his mercy spoke to his heart, showed him the error of his ways, and now he desires most earnestly to seek the salvation of his soul. I made some inquiries about his former principles, present conduct, etc., and received very suitable answers. I gave him such advice as I judged would be useful to him, and we parted, he having promised that he would give himself up to God and his people. When we got home, I took from my pocket a letter which was put into my hand, just as I closed the evening service, and read as follows:—

"'Rev. Sir,—Be pleased to pray for one who in all his life never prayed for himself; pray that the Lord would enable him to pray. I am persuaded the prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Oh! that I could pray like you! Oh! that I could exalt Jesus as you do! You told me this morning He died for all. Has He died for me, who never bent a knee to Him, but have persecuted Him? I have been endeavouring to pray, but have not words sufficient to express myself. Pray, sir, to the Lord for me, that I may be able to lift Him up, and to lay hold of one link of that golden chain you mentioned this morning. I have often said to my wife, "Can you pray?" Her reply has been, "I never was taught." She says to me, "Why don't *you* pray?" I reply, "I don't know how." Oh, Lord! teach us to pray; and, good sir, pray for me. I am present under the canvas to be taught. Oh, Lord, teach me! Amen.'

"'AN OLD SINNER WHO NEVER PRAYED, BUT BY LIVING IN HARE STREET FIELDS, BEGINS TO THINK OF IT.'

"The above letter was written in a very good hand, folded very neatly, and directed to the preacher. Who the writer is I know not. It is evident he is one that the Lord has had to do with, and I hope he will speedily be brought to a knowledge of the truth."

At a fellowship meeting, held shortly after, the converted infidel, to whom allusion has been made, gave the following interesting account of himself:—

"He commenced by observing that he had never been to such a meeting before; that he was entirely ignorant of the nature of the meeting till he came there; that he had written some account of himself, intending to give it me, but that as it was not done so correctly as he could wish, he would take the present opportunity of declaring what God had done for his soul. 'I have been for many years,' said he, 'a professed infidel, and have frequently stood forward to abuse the Christian revelation. A few weeks since I had put into my hands a little work, entitled "Evidences of Revealed Religion," by the Hon. J. Addison. The same day on which I first saw this book, I saw also a handbill announcing the Tent-preaching in Hare Street Fields, and also that the gentlemen who should preach were from Bristol. As I am a native of Bristol, I felt inclined to go and hear those who came from my native city. I went to the evening service, and you, sir, were officiating. Immediately I entered the place my eyes fastened upon you, and my mind was fixed by your very looks. There was something in your manner and appearance, that produced seriousness in my heart, and I was obliged to listen. But, sir, when you came to open and apply the blessed Word of God, it went as a dagger to my heart. I felt a power of conviction I had never felt before; I saw the necessity of embracing Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and felt determined, by the help of God, to seek after a knowledge of the truth. Since then I have been present at all your meetings; the Lord has continued to enlighten my mind; and now I, who a month ago denied Jesus and his atonement, and who, if any person had told me such a change would have taken place in my heart, would have treated it with contempt, am here, in this blessed place, and before you all, can testify that I believe Jesus is my Saviour. I have read the writings of

Voltaire, Rousseau, Tom Paine, Carlyle, and others, and have their works still by me; but, sir, if you will condescend to come to my humble abode, you should be a witness to their destruction, for I intend to commit them all to the flames; and I hope, sir, you will never cease your labours in the blessed work of saving sinners; and may the Lord give you great and increasing success.' To these remarks he added many others equally interesting; but my soul was too deeply affected to permit me to make memoranda of any more. My dear brother Jeffs told me, as he returned, that he was never so blessed in his soul as on this occasion; 'and although,' said he, 'I have often thought I had been foolish in laying out £200 in the erection of the schoolroom at Hare Street Fields, yet, had the place cost £500, the testimony of this young man was worth it all.'"

Of a similar meeting, held in Webb Square Chapel, other interesting details are given :—

"A backslider told us he was restored in consequence of hearing us preach in Hare Street Fields, and if it were possible he would travel 20,000 miles to be with us day and night. A female, of decent and interesting appearance (the one who burst into tears on Tuesday evening), informed us that some years since she was brought to a knowledge of the truth, and for five years walked in the light of God's countenance. She then omitted private prayer, and by degrees went back into the world. Her husband, who had also been a professor, imbibed the same spirit, and with her had turned aside from the good way. During this relapse they had felt very unhappy; but were both ashamed to return to God's house and people. Last Sunday week they came for an evening walk to Hare Street Fields. Their attention was arrested by the appearance of the Tent; the woman proposed to her husband to see what it was. He consented, and they came. Brother S. was engaged in pressing the question, 'Is thine heart right?' The word came with power, and from that night she began again to call on the name of the Lord. An aged man, a German, now spoke, and observed, that though he had travelled all over the world, and attained the age of sixty years, yet he never found the love of God till he heard us preach in Hare Street Fields. A woman spoke of having been stirred up to seek the Lord, when this little chapel was first opened; and another of having been awakened under my last sermon, during my former visit to London, when I preached from 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.' And to these testimonies many more were added equally clear and satisfactory."

The closing services connected with this second visit to the metropolis were of the most enthusiastic description, attended by nearly 10,000 people. Mr. Pyer seems to have felt more than usually the responsibility of the work. He writes:—

"I would have given all I possessed at this moment for some one to take my place. This, however, was useless; the burden fell upon me, and I must of necessity, though a stripling, use the sling and the stone. The immense multitude was still as night. As soon as I opened my lips, the

Lord came to my help, and as I proceeded, He strengthened my body and voice, so that my friends who were withoutside informed me, that had there been 20,000 instead of 10,000 all might have heard. But what was of more consequence than this, the Lord so poured out his Spirit upon us and the congregation, that the Word was made spirit and life to our souls. For the space of two hours, I continued to strike with that hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces, the most lively and blessed sensation prevailing all the time. 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' reverberated all over the field, and I doubt not, from the effects visibly produced, many a heart was touched. When I concluded my discourse, I gave out a hymn, and brother W. prayed. By this time I had, in some degree, recovered my strength, and I broke out in supplication. The Lord gave me the spirit of the duty; and as in preaching, so in praying, I was at a loss how and when to conclude. . . . . When I made a final close, hundreds pressed together to shake hands, insomuch that I was obliged to leave the taking down of the Tent to others, and get off the ground as quickly as possible to prevent confusion, if not actual accident. Never have I witnessed such universal flow of affection, and eagerness to show it. Now, Lord, follow the service with thy blessing, and all will be well. My body is quite sunk down, my animal spirits are exhausted; still God is my refuge, and Christ my all in all. 'To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.'"

SECTION III.

But we must pass rapidly on to the next important era in Mr. Pyer's devoted life—his first visit to Manchester. A gentleman of French extraction, formerly (we believe) resident in Bristol; but now settled in the North, being deeply concerned for the masses of factory operatives, who at that period seemed grossly neglected, as far as regards religious teaching, had pressed much for a visit to Manchester with the Tent. Arrangements were therefore made, and on Friday, August 17, 1821, Mr. Pyer, accompanied by another of their preachers, first set foot in this city of world-wide fame, which was destined, as we shall hereafter find, to become, in no common degree, a stand-point of interest and importance in his history. Their journey, long and tedious, presents a striking contrast to the velocity of modern transit. Leaving Bristol by "The Traveller" coach at eight o'clock in the morning, they reach Birmingham soon after eight o'clock in the evening; and start from thence the following morning at half-past six, arriving at Manchester about five o'clock in the evening. After taking tea, and committing themselves and their mission to God in prayer, they sallied forth in search of their friend, feeling themselves strangers in a strange land. Unsuccessful in their attempts to find Mr. A., they entered a large Methodist chapel in Oldham Street, and were grieved to see only a handful of people holding a prayer-meeting, and this in the midst of an extensive Society, and in the largest provincial town in England. About ten o'clock the next morning Mr. A. is found, who received them with great cordiality and affection, took them to view the ground on which the Tent was to be erected, and insisted upon their making his house their home during their stay in Manchester. Many of the leading Dissenters in the town, took a deep interest in their proceedings from the very first, amongst whom one distinguished individual still living (George Hadfield, Esq., M.P.) deserves special mention. But we will take Mr. Pyer's own description of the circumstances :—

"Sunday, August 19.—Erected the Tent by ten o'clock, having met with willing assistance from many. Messrs. Hadfield and Harbottle (two dissenting gentlemen of much public spirit, and earnestly desirous of promoting the knowledge of God, to whom we were introduced yesterday by Mr. A.) were present, and by their influence procured forms from the adjoining Sabbath school for our accommodation. The Sunday-school children also attended, and about 1000 persons of different descriptions, amongst whom God so manifested his power and love, that I believe all prejudice was at once driven away, and all felt truly 'this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven.' In the afternoon the congregation was doubled, and was by far the most *elegant* one I had ever seen under the Tent. At night we had a still larger company, to whom we spoke with the greatest liberty, and in some of whose hearts, I doubt not, God will effectually sow the seed of his blessed and holy Word. Upon the whole, this has been a most blessed and encouraging day, such as my feeble faith had not anticipated in Manchester. In no place have I witnessed such a total absence of everything approaching to rudeness and contempt, although we are in one of the most neglected parts of this populous town, surrounded by a vicinity containing a population of nearly 30,000, among whom, I am told, there is neither church nor chapel of any description. I was enabled to say some strong things on the subject to-night, and hope they will be attended with a blessing. In many individual instances, we have had testimonies of approval, and ardent wishes for success. Several Dissenters and Methodists have testified their approbation in terms most unequivocal, and some said they never heard the gospel so sweetly before. And shall it end here? God forbid.

"Monday, Aug. 20.—At six, went and erected the Tent. From 1000 to 2000 attended the service, and God gave us a remarkable blessing. Brother S. preached; I exhorted and prayed.

"Tuesday, 21.—Enjoyed the most blessed service under the Tent this evening, with which we have been favoured since our coming to Manchester. Mr. A. commenced in prayer; I preached. Brother S. exhorted, and concluded in prayer. Truly it was heaven upon earth. The Word fell like dew upon the new-mown grass; the most affecting sensations were produced; and it was only by the exercise of extreme caution, that I prevented a degree of confusion, which would have burst upon us in every direction, had we allowed the people to proceed as they were evidently prepared to do. It appears there are many here fond of having what they call 'a glorious shout,' at which times, I am told, they are as noisy as Baal's priests, while perhaps they possess but a small degree of true devotion. Uproars of this kind we strenuously avoid, and, thank God, in every place we have been enabled to maintain propriety. This, I hope, we shall do at Manchester, and then our good, at least in this sense, will not be evil spoken of.

"Thursday, Aug. 23.—We took advantage of yesterday, and gave ourselves a day of rest. Spent part of the day at George Hadfield's, Esq., who had invited several friends to meet us. Mr. Birt (a Baptist minister), Messrs. Stocks, Marshall, W. Wood, Hesketh, and Arrivè, Methodist leaders and preachers, dined with us, and entered into extensive conversation, relative to our work and general plan of our proceedings. We gave them every information in our power, and spent the afternoon much to my satisfaction. At six we erected the Tent, and my heart joined with the people, while we mutually exulted in the love and goodness of God. We had as usual a large company."

Night after night in the week, and frequently four times on the Sabbath, did these men of God continue to unfold the mysteries of Divine love to listening crowds; and here, as in other places, their message was brought home to the sinner's heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. At length the question was mooted, as to the desirableness of erecting a chapel for the poor of this district. The idea was most zealously entertained by their good friend, Mr. Hadfield, concerning which Mr. Pyer writes:—

"Monday, Sept. 5.—Breakfasted with Mr. and Mrs. H. and spent a very profitable hour. Mr. H. is so bent upon the erection of a chapel for the poor, and the continuance of our labours in Manchester, that he has written Mr. Pocock about it, and eagerly resumed the conversation with us upon the subject this morning. We pointed out the impossibility of our staying in Manchester much longer; but stated we should leave the Tent in the hands of the Methodist local preachers, who might be willing to employ it, and most likely we might visit Manchester again in the ensuing spring. This, however, did not satisfy him. Mr. R. has manifested his opposition to the measure, and hence he fears the local preachers will be afraid to take it up. Besides, he conceives none of them will work it so heartily as we do; and he also anticipates that if we are allowed to leave Manchester, we shall not return again. On these grounds he urges our stay, and offers to contribute, to the utmost of his ability, to the erection of a 'Poor Man's Chapel.' He conceives that a good plain building, capable of holding 2000 people, might be built for £1000. This sum he thinks can be easily raised in Manchester; and from his own statements, I conclude he will give not less than £50 himself. At the present I can only say, O Lord, be Thou our guide. At two, we dined at Mr. Harbottle's, where we met Mr. and Mrs. Roby, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Wardlaw, Mr. Hadfield, and a few other friends. The conversation turned upon our Tent-preaching, and the good which has been effected by it. Mr. Hadfield urged Mr. Roby to give us a sermon in the course of the week, and after some consideration he fixed upon Thursday evening. I scarce ever met with gentlemen who entered so heartily into the subject of Tent-preaching as Messrs. Hadfield and Harbottle. I believe God has laid it upon their hearts, and I do hope for very important results. But, oh! how great is their surprise at what they are pleased to call our 'extraordinary exertions.' They wonder how it is we can get through four services on the Sabbath, and one on each evening of the week, amidst such crowds, and yet without injury to ourselves. According to their showing, we are some of the most laborious fellows in the world, and therefore deserving of their encouragement. But these conclusions of theirs form no matter of surprise to us, though we can easily conceive, how a little extra exertion occasions it, in those who are in the habit of confining their attention to the regular, and undeviating services of church or chapel. With us who labour in the highways and hedges it is different; we have not only to invite and persuade, reason and argue; but, in more senses than one, we have to compel sinners to come in, that the Lord's house might be filled; and in thus doing, body, soul, and spirit must be engaged, and ardently too, or we had better stay at home, and leave the work to abler hands. My present prayer is, Lord, make us faithful! At four o'clock we broke from our company, and went to hold a meeting at Mr. J.'s, Great Ancoat Street. About twenty neighbours were gathered together in the name of the Lord, to whom I gave a word of exhortation, and several engaged in prayer. Among the company was a young man who, though married, had been living a very dissipated life, and keeping very improper company till a week ago, when he heard us at the Tent. The Lord blessed the word to his soul; he has been constant in attending the means of grace ever since, and appears to be truly in earnest for salvation. From hence we went to drink tea with a pious couple who yesterday sent me the following note:—

"'DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—We should think ourselves greatly blessed and highly favoured, if you would condescend to favour us with your company to-morrow afternoon, and take tea with us, and we trust we should accommodate you comfortably. I think it might be a blessing to the neighbourhood, as I am fully persuaded, many would gladly receive a word or two of advice from you, in the way of exhortation and prayer. You will have the goodness to say whether it will be agreeable, and what hour will best suit you.—Yours in Christian affection,

"'T. C.'

"I insert this note for the purpose of marking its Christian simplicity. We often hear of invitations to tea and cards, but seldom an invitation to tea, exhortation, and prayer. Would to God the practice might become universal! While at tea, a young woman was introduced to us, of whom we received the following account. For some time past, she had been carrying on illicit intercourse with a man much older than herself, by whom she had been kept. Yesterday she came to the Tent, and last evening, while brother S. was preaching, he happened to remark, 'It may be I have an adulterer in my congregation;' and then reiterating the language of the text, he inquired, 'Is thy heart right?' This word was made the instrument of fastening conviction upon her mind. She trembled under a consciousness of her guilt, went away praying to God for mercy, and seems now disposed to break off her sins by repentance, and turn to the Lord with all her heart. While we were thus employed above stairs, the neighbours assembled below, among whom were several aged persons, to whom the word of exhortation appeared to be truly acceptable. While I spoke to them, tears bedewed their cheeks, and when we sang and prayed, their hearts seemed to taste the mercy and love of God. . . . . We now hastened to the school-room, and were much surprised at the number of persons flocking to it in all directions. We had published on the previous evening, that we should like to meet all, who, having received benefit under our ministry, were disposed to unite in Society, that we might converse with them on the subject of their religious experience. We expected 80 or 100 persons, but we had between 500 and 600. To speak to all these separately was impossible; we therefore exhorted them generally, explained the nature of a Christian Society, and took down the names and residences of those who felt inclined to join. Between 40 and 50 came forward, all of whom have been either newly awakened, or recovered from a state of backsliding during our labours in the Tent. Glory be to God! Oh! that all these may stand fast in that day when Thou 'makest up thy jewels!'

"Tuesday, Sept. 4.—We breakfasted at Mr. S.'s, Great Ancoat Street. This gentleman appears very friendly, and enters heartily into our plans and views. He pressed us to make his house our home at any time. 'Only rap at my door,' said he, 'and say, I am a Bristol Tent Methodist, it will be a sufficient introduction.' Thus did this kind-hearted man express his hospitable views; but this sort of hospitality, is not confined to him; we meet with it from every quarter. At the appointed hour we again spread our banners, and brother B. preached his farewell sermon from our favourite motto, 'If this counsel,' etc. He had liberty in preaching, and occupied nearly two hours, and a blessing was evidently given with the word. Tickets of admission to the fellowship meeting, were given to some scores of persons at the close. Truly the Lord is working for his glory; the Spirit is poured out, and numbers are pressing into the kingdom of God. Our hearts are enlivened with the cheering prospect, and we hail them as tokens of future and extensive good.

"Wednesday, Sept. 5.—A comfortable day and a blessed fellowship meeting in the evening. About 400 were present, and such an assembly was scarce ever seen in Manchester before. Methodists of the Old and New Connection, Bandroom, and Primitive

Methodists, Baptists, and Independents, and scores of no Society at all, formed the mixed array, among whom the grace and mercy of God was graciously displayed.

"Thursday, Sept. 6.—At six this evening I parted with Brother S., who is gone to Bristol, and immediately after erected the Tent. Mr. Roby (the loved and venerated minister of Grosvenor Street Independent Chapel) preached a useful, satisfactory sermon, and hundreds heard with the most serious and devout attention. Mr. Hadfield was present, and, as we were taking down the Tent, renewed with Mr. A. and myself, the conversation concerning building a chapel. He is still more urgent upon this affair, and goes beyond all that I had previously calculated on. This evening he offered, if we would set about the thing heartily, £100 as his subscription. This is a good omen; but I can hardly see my way clear yet. Perhaps the Lord will presently open my path.

"Sunday, Sept. 9.—Another glorious day. At seven we commenced our public service as usual, and had the Tent well filled. Brother G. preached; I assisted him. His sermon was clear and convincing, his manner of speaking very distinct; and the blessing of God accompanied the Word. At half-past ten, the weather continuing favourable, a large company was drawn together. I commenced the service, and read the 15th of Luke, commenting as usual. The people seemed to be melted down; and when I followed with prayer, it was difficult to proceed. Mr. Pollard preached, and, seizing the very spirit, he dwelt with peculiar force upon the second verse of the chapter read, 'This man receiveth sinners.' His mode of treating the subject was so judicious, his method of reasoning so close, clear, and convincing; and, above all, such a blessed unction attended the Word, as made me truly ashamed of myself; and it seemed to rob me of all confidence in myself as a preacher of the everlasting gospel. When he had finished I gave a word of exhortation, and the Lord came to my help, so that, notwithstanding my previous fears, I had much liberty, and good appeared to be done. In the afternoon we were deprived of our forms, they being wanted for the Sabbath school; added to this, it rained hard all the time of the service; but nothing seems to deter the people in their attendance. The Tent was exceedingly crowded, and God gave us a remarkable blessing. At six it cleared up, the forms were brought back, and a vast assembly attended and surrounded us. I preached from 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' and never do I remember speaking with apparently greater effect. The congregation was solemn as death, and the Word of the Lord ran like fire among stubble. Mr. A. gave an exhortation, and, when he finished, Mr. Hadfield begged permission to speak. He then bore the most decided and unequivocal testimony to the ability of our labours, expressed his conviction that something should be done to perpetuate the work so blessedly begun, proposed that a chapel should immediately be raised, and, in conclusion, appealed to me as to what were my intentions and designs. I then stated a few of the leading circumstances, connected with our ejectment from the Methodist Society, informed them that we had offered the Tent to the Manchester Methodists, whose answer I had not yet received; that until I had it, I could not of myself take any decided step; but that, if they refused the Tent, then we could no longer hesitate; but, attending to Mr. H.'s suggestions, would set about getting a chapel at once. We concluded with singing and prayer, and retired blessing and praising the name of the Lord. At Mrs. N.'s, afterwards, I had one of the best seasons I ever remember at family worship; and at eleven retired to rest, much fatigued in body, but truly happy in my spirit.

"Monday, Sept. 10.—Just as I was entering the Tent this evening, Mr. A. informed me, that the travelling preachers of the Manchester and Salford Circuits having met together, had come to the unanimous determination, neither to employ the Tent nor to receive those persons into the Society, who had been awakened under our ministry. Consequently, when I had done preaching, I mentioned these circumstances to the congregation, and told them, please God, we would endeavour to raise a chapel, and continue our ministry amongst them. But I was not at all aware of the effect this would produce. The moment the last sentence escaped my lips, a universal burst of joy broke out, and it was only by earnest entreaty, they were prevailed upon to set bounds to their feelings. Fixed for to-morrow evening to receive names of subscribers."

During the next fortnight, we find him busily occupied in affairs connected with the rearing of this new sanctuary, in addition to their regular Tent services. The landlord of a public-house, near the scene of their labours, offered to give a piece of land; but it not being an eligible site, he subscribed £50 instead. After some little difficulty, a suitable spot was secured in Canal Street, Great Ancoats, in the midst of a teeming mass of factory operatives, and a building committee formed, of which Mr. Bury (a Baptist) was treasurer, and Mr. Arrivè, secretary. Mr. Pyer writes:—

"Thursday, Sept. 27.—Concluded our contract this morning with Messrs. Petty and Son, to build the chapel, 78 ft. by 60 ft., for £900. While I was thus engaged, Mr. S. (who arrived last evening) erected the Tent upon the ground intended for the chapel, and prepared everything for the service. This had been announced by handbills, consequently we had an immense assemblage. I began with singing and prayer; Mr. Birt (a Baptist minister) preached a most useful sermon. Smith and I followed with exhortation, and we had one of the most animating, blessed, and refreshing meetings at which I was ever privileged to be present. The conclusion of the whole, however, baffles description. The dear people knew I was about to leave them for a season, and therefore every one was eager to take leave. I shook hands with many scores, and then was obliged most peremptorily to refuse the favour to any others, in order to free myself from their importunities. Mr. Brookes, the banker, who was present, sent his compliments afterwards, with an offer to advance all the money required for the completion of the building, until such time as the subscriptions can be gathered in. And is all this of man?—of the devil? God be merciful to us! How do we confine the Divine Being by our contracted views and apprehensions. My friend Mr. J., a steward in the old Society, told me, as we returned, that he thought, while sitting under the Word, that should any of his friends endeavour to influence his mind by speaking against us, he should at once reply, 'You cannot persuade me that honey is not sweet.' And this, I am persuaded, many others would feel and say, did they only come and hear, and judge for themselves."

SECTION IV.

Scarcely a month had passed—hardly in relaxation, but simply in change of work amongst his old Gloucestershire friends, when Mr. Pyer returned to Manchester; and on Sunday, October 21st, we find him "hailed with joy and gratitude" by the warm-hearted people of the North. He writes—"Directly the lesson was read, I gave out, 'My God, the spring of all my joys;' and instantly the dear people almost universally burst into tears. I took for my text this short but comprehensive sentence, 'Blessed be God,' the very repetition of which, under such circumstances, was itself a sermon."

Similar labours to those already specified, were his daily lot, to which were now added the oversight, to some extent, of affairs connected with the new building. Visits in the neighbourhood to Runcorn, Warrington, and to Liverpool, with the Tent, had been paid; but we must pass these by, to make room for an account of the services, connected with the opening of the chapel in Canal Street, as it was then called, "The Poor Man's Chapel." It had been rapidly erected in about three months; was exceedingly plain, though commodious, the walls, internally, whitewashed, but not even plastered; yet it was hailed as a welcome shelter during the winter months, for a people gathered as it were from the wilderness. Mr. Pocock, and several friends from Bristol, were present on the occasion. Of the circumstances attending this interesting event, Mr. Pyer thus writes:—

"Sunday, December 23 (1821).—At ten this morning we opened our chapel, and the Lord graciously manifested himself amongst us. Mr. Pocock preached with a measure of liberty; and all the way through the service it was good, very good, to be there. In the afternoon I preached from the passage which stands upon the stone in front of the chapel—'To the poor the gospel is preached'—with much comfort, and I hope with some effect. At six, Mr. Birt of York Street, having closed his own chapel, and invited his congregation to attend with him, preached for us; and truly it was the gospel not in word only, but in power and in much assurance, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The attendance at each service was large, collections liberal, and the day begun and continued with the presence and power, the mercy and grace of God. What hath God wrought? formed the exclamation of our wonder, and characterized the offering of our praise."

"December 24.—The greater part of this day was spent in revising and new modelling our rules. At four we dined at Mr. Hadfield's. Besides our own friends from Bristol, Messrs. Potter, Harbottle, Walmsley, Stocks, Birt, etc., were present, and we spent a very harmonious and comfortable evening. When dinner was over, Mr. H. produced a paper containing the sentiments of our Dissenting friends, as to what mode of church government we should adopt, and what was in their estimation the most scriptural, and therefore the most safe. Afterwards I read over our rules, as revised by ourselves in the morning, and when we perceived the mutual agreement between us, though they had been drawn up independent of any communication with each other, we were constrained to glorify God. Mr. H. then called upon Messrs. Pocock and Birt to pray, and with their voice, every heart seemed to join. After tea we had some more prayer, and continuing in pleasing and profitable conversation till near twelve o'clock, we brought in Christmas Day, by singing one of our Nativity hymns, and praying especially for blessings upon the work in which the Lord had engaged us in this town. We then separated with mutual feelings of gratitude and joy.

"Tuesday, December 25.—While breakfasting this morning, Mr. P. begged me to preach, on account of his severe cold. I consented, and spoke from these two words, 'A Saviour.' An evident unction seemed to rest on the whole congregation. At two we held our fellowship meeting, which continued till nearly five o'clock. This was indeed a season of great encouragement and much triumph; and yet a time of humiliation too. I know not how it is with others; but to me, there is nothing more humbling, than the consciousness that by unequivocal testimony God frequently gives, that my labours are owned and crowned with his blessing. I see so much of my own unfitness for the work, and unworthiness to be employed in it, that I am led to wonder how He can work so gloriously, by an instrument so weak and mean. I know many of the people think I have extraordinary talents and abilities; but alas, how little do they know of my real ignorance, my impotency for a work so sacred and holy, and important, as the Christian ministry. I am ever learning, aiming, endeavouring, but how far do I feel short of the mark. The Lord pardon and help me for Christ's sake! At six this evening the chapel was again well filled, and the good Lord of the harvest sent with his faithful and able labourer, a blessing of no common or partial kind. Dr. Raffles of Liverpool preached, and with more divine unction than I ever remember to have attended his word before. To-night I could say, 'Lo God is here.' After the public service, we sat down to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We had nearly 300 communicants, and among them, several Dissenters and Methodists of the most respectable class. Dr. R. also remained, and truly this was, as the Doctor characterized it in his closing prayer, 'a feast of love.' Messrs. Pocock and Roberts distributed the bread and wine; and I conducted the service. Thus has finished our opening services, for which, and all the ten thousand blessings connected with it, we do most heartily and sincerely bless and adore the name of the Lord. The collections amounted to nearly £80."

We trust our extracts have not been unduly tedious. As we have already intimated, Mr. Pyer's introduction to Manchester led to such marked results, and were in themselves of so striking a character, that we could not forbear going pretty much into detail. During the next two years, his time was divided between Bristol, London, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester, in each of which towns the Tent was used with much success. He had a severe illness during his sojourn in Liverpool, the result of cold taken after excessive labour in the Tent services. But the blessing of God upon remedial measures taken, ultimately overcame disease, and his life was spared for many years of further usefulness. At this time also he was joint-editor, with Mr. Pocock, of a magazine and hymn-book, specially designed for denominational purposes. Their labours with the Tent in the metropolis, were countenanced by the Home Missionary Society, and arrangements made to assist in the work. Names hallowed in the memory of our Christian Churches are associated with these early efforts, such as the Rev. Charles Hyatt, Alexander Fletcher, Timothy East, etc.

His long intervals of service in Manchester were supplied by local agency; but this not being at all times the most efficient, the congregations and interest generally at Canal Street somewhat declined. It was then proposed, early in 1824, by a gentleman who very warmly espoused their cause, that certain alterations should be made to the chapel, to render it more comfortable and attractive, and that Mr. Pyer should remain with them permanently as their pastor. The improvements suggested were, to some extent, absolutely necessary, as we have already shown by reference to its bare and comfortless appearance; but the plans proposed by Mr. S. were of the most extensive character, including a minister's house, two large schoolrooms, and four cottages, and could not be accomplished without a vast outlay of money. Mr. Pyer saw this, and remonstrated with his too zealous friend, but without avail. Providence having greatly prospered him in business, Mr. S. had determined to build a house for God; and in fulfilment of this vow, during Mr. Pyer's absence in Bristol, he brought the matter before the official members of the Society, and got his plans adopted by them, with the understanding that he was to furnish the means. In the summer of 1825, Mr. Pyer acceded to the wishes of the people at Canal Street, and settled permanently amongst them as their pastor. The chapel was re-opened, with the addition of galleries, and other improvements as above specified, in June, 1826, when sermons were preached by the Rev. John Ely, then of Rochdale, and the Rev. R. S. M'Call, then of Macclesfield;

men honoured and renowned throughout Christendom; but who, with the friend they patronized, have passed away to their everlasting reward and rest.

That we might give a succinct account of the steps which led to Mr. Pyer's settlement in the North, we have passed over one event in his history of personal interest and importance—the death of his mother, which took place March 6th, 1824. He was summoned to her dying bed from his "ministerial duties in Liverpool and Manchester," a short time previous to her removal; and from the memoir which he drew up for their magazine, we subjoin the following particulars of the closing scene:—

"Saturday, March 6.—Early this morning my sisters sent to me to say my dear mother was dying. I hastened to obey the summons, and about seven o'clock was at the bedside of the dear departing saint. . . . . Soon after I entered her room, I observed, 'Well, mother, it will not be long before the conflict is over.' She could not articulate, but she smiled, and nodded assent. Some time afterwards she desired to be turned upon her right side, and then my eldest sister asked her if she knew me. Being satisfied on this point, I then approached more nearly to her, and finding her more sensible and collected, I said, 'My dear mother, are you still possessed of peace?' She looked at me very significantly, and, with an emphasis I hope never to forget, she replied '*Comfort!*' I remarked, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.' She smiled, nodded, and made some observations; but what they were could not be distinctly gathered, as her speech had begun to fail. Shortly after, she asked what time it was. H. replied, 'Ten minutes to ten.' She then said, 'Prepare my bed, and let me die.' The pillows having been adjusted by my youngest sister, she turned herself round, and appeared tranquil and composed. About a quarter before eleven o'clock, she raised her eyes and hands toward heaven, and her lips moved either in prayer or praise, while her calm and smiling countenance testified the placidity of her ransomed spirit. She continued thus for a few minutes, and then, without sigh, or groan, or struggle, in the most peaceful, tranquil manner, her spirit slipped away, and now rests with Jesus. Such was her departure; such may mine be! Amen."

He likewise memorialized this solemn event in a poem published in the "Tent Methodist Magazine," which terminates thus :—

"And does thy happy soul e'er cast a look
Behind, on those who still are left to toil
For life? Methinks thou dost; and shouldst thou be
Permitted, thou wilt help and watch, guard and
Defend, the heads and hearts of those who yet
To thee are dear. So may it be, and when
The weary wheels of my eventful life
Shall reach their rest, oh, may my spirit rise
With thee, to glory and to God!"

A few extracts from his journal, during his pastorate at Canal Street, will supply information of a varied character. There are many references in its pages, to the religious experience of candidates for church-fellowship, some happy deaths of Sunday scholars, etc.; but these are too numerous, and, it may be, too general in their complexion, to be of extensive or special interest. We suppress them in favour of some likely to prove acceptable to a larger number of readers:—

"Tuesday, August 19, 1826.—Mr. M'All, of Macclesfield, preached his famous missionary sermon (delivered at Surrey Chapel in May last) at Mr. Roby's this evening. He occupied one hour and forty minutes in its delivery. Lofty and grand in conception, elegant and sublime in expression, full of imagery and of deep pathos, it nevertheless lost much of its effect from a want of energy. Mr. M'All cannot *read* as he preaches; he has not strength enough.

"Thursday, August 21.—The new Independent Chapel, Rusholme Road, was opened to-day. The Rev. James Parsons, of York, preached at half-past eleven, and the Rev. J. Thorpe, of Bristol, at seven. Mr. Thorpe's was a gigantic performance. His subject was, 'The kingdom of Christ;' text, 'The sceptre shall not depart,' etc. Never did I hear the subject so entered into, and so fully explained in all its glorious details, in one discourse before. What a grasp of intellect! He occupied one hour and thirty minutes. We all dined at Mr. John Potter's, and passed the time very agreeably with the family and other friends.

"Christmas Day, 1826. — Our Sunday-school sermons were preached by Mr. Lister and Dr. Raffles. Mr. L.'s sermon was very excellent, but it did not touch upon the subject of Sabbath schools, being on the Transfiguration of Christ. Dr. R.'s discourse was a very blessed one, and seemed to be accompanied with Divine life and unction. At the close of his sermon, he addressed a word to me personally, exhorting me to persevere in prophesying among the dry bones, under the assurance that my 'labour should not be in vain in the Lord.' I felt his kindness and brotherly affection, and was encouraged. Dined at Mr. J. B. Clarke's. Our conversation turned upon the moral and religious condition of the people surrounding our chapel, and the necessity of prompt and vigorous measures to do them good. Mr. S. particularly urged his claims upon the benevolent, for assistance in bearing the temporal burdens of the place; and finding an opportunity, I told the company the manner in which I was left to manage everything, both in the Sabbath school, congregation, and church; having neither deacon or friend to take me by the hand and afford me aid, either in temporal or spiritual matters, nor any respectable person to countenance or encourage the cause of God, among the poor but pious few, which God had made me the humble instrument of drawing together. This I attributed mainly to the removal of Mr. S. from Manchester (he had gone to reside at Heaton), of whom we now saw nothing, except about once a month. All seemed to sympathize with me, and several said some encouraging things, particularly Mrs. C. and Dr. Raffles. After the evening service, Mr. W. promised us £5 per annum for the next two years. I know not what effect these conversations will have; but I see it is my duty to cleave to God, and go on my way, unless his providence shall point out to me another station. 'Trials must and will befall;' but if the Lord should be pleased to use me for his glory, so as to make me instrumental in winning souls to Him, amid a population so degraded and careless, and under so many discouraging circumstances, perhaps my labours will be equally as pleasing to Him, and it may be more useful to others, than if they were engaged in any other neighbourhood, or employed in any other manner. After all, it is discouraging to be ever ploughing upon a rock, especially after the times of blessedness I have been permitted to witness and enjoy, when labouring with our Tent in different parts of the kingdom. I can only say, Lord, use me for thy glory."

The above passage seems to indicate a disturbance of that satisfaction and pleasure which had hitherto so largely distinguished his ministerial course. Its causes are hinted at, and must be patent to the observation of every thoughtful reader. Meanwhile we return to the daily record of events, which plainly show some gleams of sunshine amid the darkness:—

"Jan. 1, 1827.—Rose at five, and got the room prepared for the infant-school examination. The children were there very early, and before nine the company began to assemble. The examination lasted from ten to twelve, and appeared to give universal gratification. At the close I gave an address to the parents, while the children ate the currant loaf kindly provided for them by Mrs. C. The Rev. H. Stowell, Messrs. Birt and Jarrold, two youths from Madagascar, and other friends, were present, besides a very numerous assemblage of the parents of the children; and all expressed their high satisfaction. After dinner the Sabbath-school teachers assembled, to the number of fifty, when we transacted a variety of business, and took tea together. Our meeting was harmonious and encouraging; and, among other important things, we resolved upon commencing the distribution of religious tracts throughout the neighbourhood, upon the loan system. At seven assembled in the chapel, when I preached from 1 Cor. xv. 58."

A visit to the celebrated Stockport Sunday school is thus narrated:—

"Lord's Day, Feb. 11.—The morning rose upon me propitiously, and, thank God, the evening closes in peace. At half-past ten I had a sweet time in preaching the Word, which, I have good reason to conclude, was received by my dear people with all readiness of mind. Mr. L. W. took me to Stockport in his gig. We arrived just as the children were assembling. About 2000 were present—a noble and affecting sight. The Lord, I hope, gave me a word in season, if I may judge from appearances. The dear children were pleased and profited. Having never been in the room before, the spectacle to me was most grand and imposing. It reminded me strongly, as all large assemblies usually do, of the judgment-day; and when referring in my address to their privileges, contrasting them with Africans and Hindoos, I was much affected, and almost overpowered. Oh, that good may follow! After the service, I walked through the building with some of the gentlemen of the committee, and then took tea with Mr. M., Mr. W., and others, in one of the rooms adjoining the large one. We spent an agreeable hour together, and at six I delivered the public lecture. When about to retire, Mr. M. presented me with the usual compliment; but I declined accepting it, notwithstanding his entreaties. I do not know how others feel; but while my own congregation supply me with food and raiment, I cannot freely accept anything beyond the amount of actual expenses. I seem to consider these occasional services as additional opportunities of doing good, and as such I rejoice in being honoured to share them. This is certainly a noble establishment, yet there are some things connected with it (as teaching writing and arithmetic on the Sabbath) of which I think no Christian can approve. I wanted a little private chat with Mr. M. on this matter; but found no opportunity. On this ground I seemed to grieve having accepted the invitation to preach there, when the circumstances came to my knowledge, though, upon the whole, I do not repent having gone."

How characteristic is the above incident of Mr. Pyer's unselfish disinterestedness. All who knew him intimately, will recognize it as a leading trait of his character. As regards the objectionable system at that time observed in the Stockport Sabbath school, we believe more recent animadversions have led to an alteration. We trust we are not mistaken in this surmise.

The affecting circumstances attending the death of his youngest brother, to whom he was more than ordinarily attached, are thus memorialized :—

"Monday, Feb. 19.—The die is cast. My dear brother George, one of the first seals to my ministry, is safely lodged in Abraham's bosom. It appears by a letter received this morning, that he terminated his earthly toils and sufferings on Saturday last, early in the morning. 'Tis all right. Glory be to Thee, O God! I go down this afternoon."

Full particulars of this melancholy journey and its attendant circumstances, are given in a letter to his youngest sister, then residing with him at Manchester. We subjoin an extract from its close, illustrative of the tenderness of his nature, which the bitterness of personal sorrows had but purified and deepened :—"The dear, dear children are more than ever interesting. I am more affected when I look at them, than with anything else. Oh, that I could take them to my hosom, and keep them there! . . . . I look upon them with a father's eye."

During this brief visit to his native city he had opportunities of preaching to those amongst whom he formerly laboured. He was everywhere received with heartiest welcome, and, in some instances, crowds were disappointed in their attempts to gain admission where he preached. At Collier's Temple, where so many gracious seasons had been enjoyed, he says—"I was detained a long time after the service, by the kindness and affection of numbers who flocked around to testify their regard for their old friend. Oh, that they may all be Thine in that day!"

SECTION V.

He returned to Manchester on the 30th of March, bringing his youngest nephew with him, a lad about nine or ten years of age, who for twelve months shared with us the comforts of home.

Soon after his return to Manchester, circumstances of a trying and perplexing kind arose, in connection with the commercial difficulties of the gentleman, who has been already alluded to, as having laid out large sums of money in improving and enlarging the premises at Canal Street. He now declared himself "unable any longer to support his share of the burdens on Canal Street," and proposed to Mr. Pyer, "that he should seek some other mode of supporting his family." This was but the "beginning of the end." Gradually, but not less surely, dissatisfaction worked its way. For the next two or three years, Mr. Pyer and his poor but devoted flock, endured a series of persecutions and distressing annoyances from this quarter, such as we should hope are not of frequent occurrence in Church history. His proposal to sell the property, and refund to himself the money he had laid out, was resisted by the trustees, the public having subscribed more than a thousand pounds of the original cost. Ultimately the place was sold, and is now in possession of the Established Church. A portion of the proceeds of sale was devoted to the erection of another chapel, for the use of the original congregation.

Visiting the spot a few years ago, the writer was deeply affected by the many and varied memories which crowded upon her mind. Of the endeared family circle—a father, aunt, sister, and two cousins, who had there enjoyed the endearments of home, had faded away—she is the only survivor! We were happy to find, however, that a faithful, zealous clergyman laboured there, and that both the Sabbath and day schools were large and flourishing. He who once toiled so arduously was gone; but others have entered into his labours. What had formerly been the garden, was covered with a recently-erected infant schoolroom, and the minister's house was inhabited by a Scripture-reader, whose wife courteously showed us over the premises, and seemed thoroughly to enter into our emotions, as we pointed out various portions of the house, hallowed by childhood's recollections.

But to return from this digression, to matters more immediately illustrative of the career and character of the beloved subject of these pages. From allusions already made, it may be readily supposed his path was now in many respects rough and wearisome. Many anxious forebodings regarding the future, must at times have disturbed his peace. Yet the Lord was doubtless leading him by a right way, to the adoption of what he considered more enlightened views of Christian truth, and by this means introducing him into altogether new fellowships and associations. There was yet a "bright light in the cloud," which spoke peace and comfort to his troubled heart. We find him thus noting a visit of Dr. Wardlaw's:—

"Monday, June 11, 1827.—Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, preached this evening, and made a collection for our Sabbath school, which amounted to between £18 and £19. Most of the Dissenting ministers were present. Mr. M'All opened the service, I gave out the hymns, and the Doctor gave us an excellent discourse, adapted to throw considerable light on the atonement, and its effects in bringing sinners to God; though I fear not very easily understood by my poor people. How possible is it, even when evangelical truth is delivered, and delivered with brilliancy too, for the hungry sheep to look up and not be fed."

At the close of the week, he writes—"Family devotion this morning was again accompanied with a blessing. I was drawn out, while pleading with the Lord for my dear children, and for his providential guidance. Surely I would be, where the Lord shall see good to fix me. Nothing can be more clear than that the Lord directed me to my present situation; and this reconciles my mind to much that would otherwise be distressingly painful, and encourages me to pray and wait for the guidance of my heavenly Father. Oh! condescend to lead and guide me; and whether Thou art pleased to fix me in this neighbourhood more firmly, or to send me up and down in my native country as an itinerant messenger of thy mercy, or whether Thou shalt send me to the furthest verge of this green earth as a herald of thy grace, only let thy presence be with me, and let thy smile give me peace, and then all shall be well.

> 'Thy call I would follow to lands unknown,
> Or life or death is equal; neither weighs—
> All weight is this. Oh, let me live to Thee!'"

A week or two later an interesting account of the London Missionary Meeting is given, held at Grosvenor Street (Mr. Roby's), Monday, July 9th, 1827, at which Mr. Hadfield proposed they should augment their contributions; and before the meeting separated the extraordinary sum of £1043 was subscribed—a noble generosity, which has been since maintained, and even greatly exceeded.

We now approach an important and interesting passage in Mr. Pyer's mental history, when his theological views underwent a change. It will be seen from the preceding pages that, from his first coming to Manchester, he had largely shared the sympathy and patronage of Dissenters, both Baptists and Independents; and after his settlement as a pastor, he had frequent social intercourse with some of their leading men, and opportunities of hearing their most distinguished ministers. We well remember to have heard him say that, after Dr. M'All's settlement in Manchester, he changed the evening of his own week-day lecture, that he might be free to attend the Doctor's at Mosely Street, which he esteemed a high privilege.

The first reference of a distinctive nature, to anything like hesitation as to his previous opinions, is contained in the following extract from his journal:—

"Tuesday, August 10, 1827.—Attended, by particular request, the formation of the church at Rusholme Road. The first time I was ever present on such an occasion. I was deeply impressed, both by the clear and lucid statement of the principles of Dissent, and the nature of a Christian Church, made by Mr. Roby, and also the truly Christian and powerful exhortation of Mr. M'All. If what I heard this evening be correct, then in many points I am far wrong; and it really seems they have the New Testament in their favour. I must examine this subject."

We regard this simple but honest avowal as an interesting prelude to the change about to take place; and what is very remarkable, his early friend and associate in Tent labours, the Rev. G. S., whom he took with him to Liverpool, and left in charge of a congregation similar to his own, was being mentally exercised in the same way; though at the time they were mutually ignorant of each other's state of mind. Another early friend and fellow-labourer, who had joined the Baptist denomination (the Rev. J. Barnett, now settled near Leicester), about this time paid him a visit, and he took the opportunity of his services at Canal Street, to go over to Liverpool. He writes:—

"Friday, August 24 (1827).—Enjoyed a delightful ramble on the Cheshire side with Mr. S., and had interesting conversations, particularly on the subject of Congregational principles. Strange that on this latter ground, he and I should both, without the least previous concert, be directed to think, and examine, and judge, and that his researches should have terminated in conviction, more firm and clear than mine! Is the finger of God in this? Surely I shall not easily forget this afternoon?"

A little subsequent to this, a very warm friendship had sprung up between Mr. Pyer and the Rev. John Smith, of Hulme, who had just given himself to missionary work, and soon after sailed to Madras; where, after labouring a few years, he was accidentally drowned. The commencement of their friendship was singular and original. At a Bible-meeting which they both attended, Mr. Smith was first struck by Mr. Pyer's appearance, inquired who he was, and introduced himself to his notice. From that day their friendship was dated, which rapidly became established and confirmed.

Knowing what had been his early predilections, we can hardly wonder that such a friendship should revive former aspirations and hopes. Consequently we find him communicating his desires to Mr. Roby, to the great delight of his friend, who hoped to have him for a fellow-labourer. His reasons for entertaining the subject, are stated at some length in his journal, and evince the earnest devotedness of his heart to the great work of saving souls. Mr. Smith, however, went without him, in the spring of the following year, and we cannot gather from his private papers the exact reason of his own defeated purposes; but are inclined to think they arose chiefly from difficulties connected with family circumstances.

The recognition of his friend's church in Liverpool, upon Congregational principles, at which service he was present, seems to have deepened his own convictions; for soon after his return home, he had interviews with Messrs. Roby and M'All, about placing the church at Canal Street on Congregational principles. This occurrence is thus detailed:—

"Thursday, Nov. 1, 1827.—Called on Mr. Roby, and had an extended conversation with him, on my determination to place the church at Canal Street on a Congregational foundation, and my desire to be set apart to the work of the ministry by ordination. He entered into my views with great tenderness and Christian feeling, and assured me of his good wishes and hearty co-operation. I related what had transpired at Liverpool (at the settlement of the Rev. George Smith's church and his own ordination on Congregational principles); but he thought our circumstances were different, we having formed ourselves into an Independent church in February, 1825, and that an ordination service was all that would be necessary. However, when I pointed out to him the desirableness of our being first acknowledged as a sister church, by the Congregational churches of Manchester, he concurred in its propriety, and we settled first to hold a recognition service, provided the other ministers agreed. Lord; open the way!

"Tuesday, Nov. 6.—Had a long conversation with Mr. M'All this morning, who entered into my views, and promised his assistance both in the recognition and ordination services. I was delighted with his urbanity and Christian kindness. Surely, O Lord! thou dost remember me in mercy. At seven I met the members of my church, and laid before them the views I had taken, and the conclusions I had come to, and then read a resolution declarative of a determination to form ourselves into a church of the Congregational faith and order, and desiring the performance of a recognition service by the Manchester ministers. I told my people that if this resolution passed, I would continue with them as their pastor; and if otherwise, I would remain with them as their minister, until a pastor should be provided. I paused for several minutes to give them time to deliberate and conclude; and then had the satisfaction to find the resolution pass without a single hand being held up against it. I then called for the names of those who consented; sixty-three gave their names, and four remained neuter, desiring to take further time to consider the matter. I feel thankful, and hope for good results.

"Saturday, Nov. 10.—Spent good part of the last four days in calling upon those members who were absent on Tuesday evening, and with one or two exceptions, all concur in the measure we have adopted. Thus my way appears plain. Oh, for a thankful heart!

"Wednesday, Nov. 14.—The final arrangements for a recognition service were made yesterday and to-day. Mr. Birt to open the service; Mr. Coombs to preach on the nature of a Christian Church; Mr. M'All to acknowledge us as a sister Church, and to address the members; Mr. Roby to preside at the Lord's Table; and Mr. Pridie to address the spectators, and conclude.

These arrangements, so auspiciously made, were however, suspended through the unworthy interference of their new opponent, Mr. S., who contended that the trust-deed would not allow of the change, etc. Mr. Pyer shared largely in the sympathy, advice, and counsel of the Dissenting ministers, while the devoted attachment of his people, enabled him to hold on, amid circumstances which would soon have crushed less vigorous hearts. He writes :—

"Dec. 15.—I think I begin to get the better of late painful occurrences, and to enjoy a greater fixedness o mind, and more confidence in the Lord. Last night, in family prayer, my soul was greatly blessed, and my heart drawn out toward Him, in fervent and constraining desire, and to-day my spirit calmly hangs upon Jesus.

"Lord's Day, Dec. 16.—In reviewing the occurrences of the day, my spirit is encouraged to trust in the Lord. I believe I shall neither labour in vain, nor spend my strength for nought. Through divine grace, I shall rise above every adversity, and be better fitted to wield the sword of the Spirit—to preach the Word of God. So I seemed to feel assured, as I sat down after my family were gone to rest, and reflected upon the manifold mercies of this blessed Sabbath."

The opening year (1828), was cheerily begun by Infant-school examination, Sunday-school teachers' tea; and the following day, Jan. 7, he writes :—

"Received seven persons into church-fellowship this evening; three (two sisters and a brother), from one family. The service throughout was affectingly impressive, and while addressing the newly admitted members, several appeared to be quite overpowered. Oh, that these may all be Thine in that day! Amen."

On the Friday following :—

"Attended the service at Mosely Street. Heard an excellent address from Mr. M'All, and was privileged to remain to witness the admission of several members into the Church. Four of Mr. H.'s family (two sons and two daughters); one (W. S.), who was awakened to a sense of sin under my ministry in the Tent, when I first came to Manchester, and formerly a member at Canal Street; and several others. I was interested, and I hope profited in a high degree."

In Sunday schools, Mr. Pyer always took a deep interest. The one connected with his own church was a very large one, numbering between 800 and 900, and the girls' school was entirely under his own superintendence.

"Lord's Day, April 27 (1828)."—He writes, "A day of labour, but of sweet enjoyment. Oh, blessed Saviour, who would not spend and be spent for Thee! Thy service is perfect freedom, it brings relief from all the cares and anxieties of this mortal state, and opens in the heart a delightful spring of heavenly joys. On a review of this day, I am induced to exclaim, 'It was good for me that I waited upon God.' This afternoon I examined the children belonging to Grosvenor Street and Blakely Street schools, who were assembled in Mr. Roby's chapel. They filled the galleries, about 1000 being present, and the congregation sat below. The subject of examination was the third chapter of John. Great quickness and acuteness were evinced in the replies of the children, who, considering they only had a week's notice, must have perused the chapter with considerable care. At the close, I gave an address to them and their parents. Mr. Roby preached the annual sermons in the forenoon and evening, when the collections amounted to £146. My own services were accompanied with an unusual degree of life-giving power.

"Lord's Day, May 18.—A day of full enjoyment and abundant blessedness. Preached at half-past ten and six at Canal Street, at three at Hulme, and spent what time I could in the morning, before service, in the schools, and an hour after the evening service, with such of the children and teachers as remained. My strength, blessed be God, has been equal to my day, and my encouragement to labour faithfully and energetically, fully proportionate. I seem to think and to see that God will cause me to be useful, if I cleave to Him with all my heart, and seek to do his work in his spirit. Often do I resolve thus to act; but hitherto I have not found how to perform. Now, Lord, help me, I beseech Thee, for Jesus' sake, and let me be no more an idler, a loiterer, a mere cumberer of the ground. Had I ten thousand lives, all are due to Thee, and all ought to be employed for thy glory and in thy service. Take me, then, body, soul, and spirit, and use me as, and when, and where Thou wilt, only let me show forth thy honour, and instrumentally promote thy blessed cause in the earth. Amen.

"Tuesday, May 27.—This evening gave the annual address to the teachers belonging to the 'Union.' It was a glorious sight to behold so many hundreds gathered together, and all engaged in a work so important in furthering the cause of Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls."

It may interest some of our readers to give his description of one of the Whitsuntide festivals. The Manchester races being held at this season, and a general holiday observed, it was customary to assemble the various Sabbath schools, and by providing some entertainment for them, seek to prevent their mingling in such scenes of dissipation. The period was eagerly anticipated some weeks beforehand by the young people, and hymns were provided and practised at the different schools, preparatory to their being sung in united chorus. Those who have been privileged to witness one of these gatherings, will not easily forget the impressive nature of the services, in which so many thousands of children and youths were the actors, to say nothing of their singing, of which this metropolis of Lancashire may well be proud:—

"Wednesday, May 28 (1828).—The schools connected with the 'Union' assembled to-day, and went in procession to the respective chapels, in which addresses to the children were delivered. Mr. Makinson, of the Methodist New Connexion, addressed those assembled in Grosvenor Street, Mr. Pridie those in York Street, and it fell to my lot to speak to the children at Mr. Coombs', Salford. It was a noble sight, to see so many thousands of children and young people brought together on such an occasion, especially while so many are flocking to the races and other scenes of guilty dissipation. At six o'clock about 500 of the teachers and conductors took tea together in Grosvenor Street school-room, and spent an hour and a half in a most cheerful, happy manner. After this festive meal we adjourned to the chapel, sung a hymn written expressly for the occasion, prayed, appointed a chairman, and then listened to accounts of moral and religious benefit, which had appeared in schools connected with the 'Union' during the past year.

"Thursday.—The schools assembled in Piccadilly, and went in procession to a field near Ardwick Green, where they formed into a large square, and sung two hymns, after which they filed off, and departed to their respective school-rooms. I drank tea with the Mosely Street teachers, in a garden just behind the Stockport toll-bar, and then returned and spent a pleasant evening with the Book Society.

"Friday.—We took our children to a field near the reservoir, and allowed them to amuse themselves for an hour. On their return, they were conducted into our two Tents, erected for the purpose near the school-room, and refreshed with currant bread and lemonade. We then let off two balloons, dismissed the children, and the teachers and friends sat down to tea, to the number of fifty and upwards. The evening was spent in singing, conversation, and various kinds of innocent amusements. Thus has passed this busy week—a week wholly devoted to pleasure by all classes in Manchester and its neighbourhood, and a week in which the torrent of iniquity seems to rush on with accumulated force. Oh! that my countrymen were turned from these vanities, to serve the living and true God!"

The Book Meeting above alluded to was of monthly occurrence, and consisted of about a dozen gentlemen, who met for the selection and ordering of books, which were circulated amongst them. Mr. Pyer acted as secretary, and upon leaving Manchester, was presented with a handsomely bound copy of Carpenter's "Introduction to the Holy Scriptures," as a mark of their esteem and friendship.

These social gatherings formed a pleasing interlude to his isolated and solitary position, and were sources of the purest enjoyment and recreation. We cannot forbear giving an incident or two in connection with them.

On one occasion, when the meeting was held at his own house, he constructed a transparency, which was encircled with evergreens, and placed over the mantelpiece of the supper-room, bearing this inscription—

"'Knowledge is power,' once said Lord Bacon,
And though some judge the sage mistaken—
Norris and *Hayward*, *Welch* and *Wright*,
Taylor and *Green* think he was right,
And so we are found at Pyer's to-night."

At another time, during the riots (we believe in 1825), a Book Meeting was being held at Mr. Pyer's, when the rioters came to the gate, and demanded that Mr. G. (the proprietor of a large mill which joined the chapel premises) should be given up to them, they imagining he was amongst the gentlemen who had been seen entering the house. Mr. Pyer and one or two of his friends went out, and assured them that Mr. G. was not in his house. Some few clamoured for a search to be made; but they were silenced at once, by their leaders exclaiming, "No; we can take Mr. Pyer's word;"—and they immediately passed on without further molestation.

During the same excited period, the rioters came one day through the street, demanding food or money from every house. If refused, they at once commenced destruction of property, such as breaking of windows, etc. They had reached the chapel house; a pause was made before the gate; a brief consultation; and then followed a quiet retreat; while the terrified servant and Mr. P.'s youngest daughter, who were alone in the house, caught the gratifying and welcome words, "We won't go there; he takes care of our children in his Sunday schools."

SECTION VI.

In the month of August, 1828, he was apprized of the serious illness of his youngest sister, who had returned to Bristol about a year previous, and was now anxious to see him. Accordingly he went to Bristol, taking with him his nephew and eldest daughter. His interviews with his dying sister were deeply affecting, and he had good reason to hope in her death, which occurred about a month after. A circumstance in connection with this visit is narrated, which we feel constrained to transcribe, as an example worthy of imitation :—

"Thursday, September 4, (1828).—Breakfasted with Mr. Leifchild, and spent a pleasant hour in talking of those things which pertain to the kingdom of Christ. He told me a remarkable instance of benevolence. A gentleman, resident in this city, who has been in business many years, had serious intentions some time ago to dispose of his mercantile concern, and retire. He possessed considerable wealth, and, independent of his business, had made a comfortable provision for his family. While arranging his plans, it occurred to him, that if free from the engagements of business, he might not be so happy as he hoped; having known many who appeared less content and happy under similar circumstances. The result was, that he decided on continuing in business; but, as he did not any longer need the profits, he resolved to devote the whole of them to works of piety and mercy. He has done so for several years, balancing his books annually, and giving away to the last farthing in the current year, the profits of the past. The Lord bless him, and multiply such examples a thousandfold."

A pleasing memorial of his early friend and patron (Mr. Thorpe) is also recorded. Referring to his son, who had just been admitted to Christ's Hospital, he says:—"In conversing with Mr. Thorpe about him the other day, and his admission into the school, he said—and I was impressed with it—'You must pray hard for him. Our prayers are too cold and too indifferent. Pray hard for him.' May I have grace so to do."

A few more extracts from his journal will show the gradual development of his providential path, and bring us to the termination of his career in Manchester:—

"Thursday, November 6 (1828).—A long conversation with Mr. M'All. He expresses much sympathy with me in my present circumstances and difficulties, and advises me to resign my post at Canal Street, and engage as an itinerant under the auspices of the Congregational Union. I do not see my way clear to follow this advice. Is it right for a minister to leave a people merely because his situation is one of difficulty? Especially when such difficulties may be removed, at least in time? I would do the will of God, and therefore am prepared to follow when He shall lead; but must have fuller and clearer convictions before I can leave my poor people.

"Lord's Day, November 16.—Messrs. Coombs and Roby preached at my place to-day, and made collections for our Sabbath school. I preached at Salford in the morning, and to the children and their parents in the afternoon.

"Monday.—Mr. M'All gave us an excellent discourse this evening, 'On the faithful saying,' and then made the collection for our schools. Took tea and supped at Mr. Clarke's, with Mr. M'All and a number of friends. A very pleasant evening—much interesting conversation, from which I hope I have learnt some few things more of my own ignorance, and of the pride and vanity of the human heart. Lord! what is man? Collections, £27 4*s*. 6*d*.—Canal Street has not lost all its friends, notwithstanding Mr. S.'s attempts.

"Lord's Day, March 22 (1829).—Preached this morning with great comfort, and an unusual flow of feeling. Expounded in the afternoon, and at six endeavoured to improve the deaths of Eliza Carpenter and Mary Pye. This was a melting, moving season. Both girls were cut off in their youth, one being sixteen, the other twenty years of age. Both were well known and respected, hence many of their companions, as well as a number of our elder scholars, were present; and I had visited both during their affliction. I felt the impressiveness of the circumstances, and was enabled, I hope, to 'deliver my own soul.' Many tender emotions appeared to be felt, and a general weeping pervaded the whole assembly. My own soul is refreshed, strengthened, and encouraged. I have sometimes thought of keeping a register of the names, etc., of those who have departed in the faith of Jesus, and have professed the reception of spiritual good by my ministry, yet perhaps such a record would only tend to minister to my vanity; nor is it at all of moment, seeing they are registered on high, preserved in Paradise, and shall be brought forth to the glory of the Saviour in the great day of account.

"Tuesday, April 7.—Drank tea at Mr. Hudson's with several ministers and friends, and then attended Mr. Gwyther's ordination, at Jackson's Lane Chapel—a solemn, powerfully affecting, and deeply impressive service. The ordination prayer, by Mr. M'All, for simplicity, feeling, and pathos; the charge, by Mr. Payne, for clearness, force, and affectionate sympathy; and the sermon to the people, by Dr. Raffles, for faithfulness, plainness, and propriety, left nothing more to desire beyond the divine influences of the Holy Spirit; and these, I would hope, descended in no ordinary manner, convincing and enlightening every humble worshipper. Mr. Ely's introductory discourse was excellent, but too long, speculative, and argumentative for the audience; and, moreover, being too long, parts were abridged, and the whole read in too hurried a manner to allow of its being impressive. Is it not the case that ministers are too apt, on such occasions, to regard the presence of brother ministers, instead of merely considering who are likely to form the bulk of the congregation? And, in consequence, are not their discourses usually more adapted to private reading, than oral communication to a mixed assembly? I am far from wishing to censure others while I behold so many occasions of censure in myself; yet I cannot help wishing, there were more simplicity in most discourses I hear upon public occasions."

The missionary anniversary, held in June, seems to have been a season of great spiritual joy to him. He writes:—"Have I ever experienced anything more like heaven upon earth, than I was permitted to realize this blessed morning? Perhaps not. Oh! how vain, and empty, and worthless, did the world appear, while listening to the ravishing, transporting, soul-stirring — I had almost said, inspired—addresses of Messrs. Dr. Philips, Leifchild, M'All, and Blackburn, each of whom addressed the company assembled at the public breakfast in Mosely Street school-room. May the savour of these refreshing seasons be found with me for many days to come! Amen."

A few days after the last entry, while waiting in the office of a friend, the "World" newspaper was put into his hand, and his attention was at once arrested by an advertisement for a "City Missionary and General Agent" for the London Christian Instruction Society. He was forcibly struck with the idea, that it might prove a sphere of usefulness for himself, and immediately consulted his ministerial friends, Messrs. M'All and Roby, and subsequently Dr. Raffles, who all concurred in thinking him well qualified for the position. After having had a personal interview with the Committee, final arrangements were made for his removal to London as early in the year as possible. But before bringing this chapter to a close, and introducing Mr. Pyer in a new and important sphere of labour, we cannot forbear making a few more extracts from his diary, which we think may interest the general reader. The first will refer to that change or modification of his doctrinal sentiments to which reference has already been made, and the means by which it was deepened and matured :—

"Monday, August 24, 1829.—Heard a masterly discourse from Mr. M'All this evening, on 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' He utterly discarded the common and hacknied way of treating this text, and entered into an elaborate argument on the freedom of the human will, the object of which was to show that man, in his natural state, was not a free agent, forasmuch as all the *propensities* of his nature predisposed him to sin, while he was totally without power to will or to choose anything good; and that, when converted, he was restored by the sovereign grace of God to freedom, that freedom consisting in a power and inclination to choose good; and hence he was made 'willing in the day of the Lord's power.' He admitted that the subject, on all sides, was beset with difficulties—difficulties which could not be explained in the present world—and made it appear that the attempt to reconcile them, had led to many unexplainable statements, both on the Arminian and Calvanistic sides of the question. Some points were adverted to, but left with too brief remark, on which I felt considerable anxiety to have the avowed sentiments of my good friend; but, on the whole, the sermon was admirable. The more I hear Mr. M. the clearer are my convictions of the truth of what are called sound and moderate Calvanistic sentiments, and the greater my wonder, that I was allowed to remain so long the willing adherent of strong Arminianism. This is only to be accounted for, by the fact of my early education in Methodistical views and principles, by which I was led to believe, Methodists were superior in their Scriptural knowledge and piety to all other people in the world; and consequently I was prevented from associating with any but Methodists, or from seeking the true enlightening of my mind on Christian doctrines generally, and thus my prejudices prevented my fairly coming to the light, to learn, and judge, and understand. My extensive acquaintance with Methodists and Methodism, enables me to assert that what was my case, is the case of thousands in that body, and hence may be traced much of their astonishing zeal, their jealousy of other sects, their boast of their own views and plans, and their almost universal bigotry. This is not bearing false witness against my neighbour; but a true statement of matters of fact, recorded for the purpose of enlivening my own gratitude for deliverance from previous trammels, and for exciting the spirit and the exercise of prayer in behalf of others, who may be situated now as I once was."

The name of Henry Royle, one of our devoted missionaries in the South Seas, is familiar to many of our readers; though it may not be so well known, that the beloved subject of our memoir was the honoured instrument of his conversion. He and his brother, and a friend, were among the last admitted to Christian fellowship during Mr. Pyer's connection with Canal Street, for whom he prays, "May they stand fast, and be a blessing to the Church." His farewell services at Canal Street, quickly followed by the demise and funeral of the venerable minister of Grosvenor Street Chapel, are thus delineated:—

"Lord's Day, Jan. 10, 1830.—Did I ever pass such a day as this has been, in any former period of my little history? Perhaps not. I dreaded its approach, and am glad it is over. Many such days as this would be too much for this poor frail frame, and would tend to its speedy dissolution. The delivery of my farewell discourses to the church and congregation, was powerfully affecting to my own mind; but the scene in the school-room, in the afternoon, while addressing the scholars, was moving beyond description. Many wept there whom I had never seen weep before, and the Word appeared to be attended with a great blessing. The congregation in the evening was large, being swelled by the presence of strangers, persons from other congregations, and many from the immediate neighbourhood, who have neglected the house of God; but hearing this was a farewell sermon, were inclined to attend. I was glad to understand that some of these lamented they had not come before, and that with constancy, to listen to the words of life. May some even of these obtain repentance. Texts, Acts xx. 27, 28; Rev. xxii. 21."

"Monday, Jan. 11.—Dear Mr. Roby went to heaven this morning about nine o'clock. He has been gradually sinking, but few seemed to anticipate he was so near the goal. He preached to the young people yesterday week, and was not materially worse till yesterday. Blessed and faithful man! He has fulfilled as an hireling his day, and now, doubtless, rests with Jesus. Oh, may I be animated by his bright, and pious, and holy example, to follow on in the ways of truth, and Christian, and ministerial devotedness!

"Wednesday, Jan. 20.—Attended Mr. Roby's funeral, and was pleased to witness the demonstration of respect, paid by persons of all ranks and denominations. The town beadles in their uniform headed the procession, which consisted of between thirty and forty clergymen and ministers; the medical attendants; the body, borne by members of Mr. R.'s church, and the pall, supported by six ministers; then Mr. R.'s relatives and deacons, as chief mourners; and then upwards of a hundred gentlemen. The morning was most unpropitious, a heavy snow-storm, accompanied by violent wind, falling the whole time; yet the chapel was crowded to excess, and the streets were thronged with multitudes of people. After we had arranged ourselves in the chapel, a hymn was sung, and then suitable Scriptures read by Mr. Coombs. Mr. Pridie prayed, and Dr. Raffles delivered one of the most impressive orations I ever heard. After singing another hymn, the corpse was borne to the yard, and deposited in a vault specially prepared for its reception. Mr.

Ely concluded the service in a short prayer. Thus he rests from his labours, near to the spot, whence he has for many years dispensed the words of grace and salvation, with remarkable fidelity and distinguished success.

"Lord's Day, Jan. 24.—Heard Mr. M'All at Grosvenor Street, at half-past ten—a funeral sermon for dear Mr. Roby. Text, Luke xii. 42—44. Of this Scripture we had a splendid exposition, and then a most accurate, faithful, and touching delineation of Mr. Roby's character, every feature of which seemed to stand out in prominent relief as Mr. M. proceeded, so that all who had any acquaintance with the deceased, must have perceived the resemblance, and those who knew him intimately, could not but allow the sketch itself gave ample evidence of the hand of a master."

Circumstances detained Mr. Pyer in Manchester a little longer than was first expected, and we have yet another entry concerning the flock he had gathered from the wilderness:—

"Lord's Day, Feb. 14.—Heard Mr. M'All this morning. Spent the afternoon piously and pleasantly at Mrs. J.'s (one of his first converts in Manchester), and in the evening attended at Canal Street, and at the close of Mr. K.'s discourse presided at the ordinance. A melting, gracious season. Many of the elder scholars remained as spectators, and the word addressed to them appeared to fall as the 'dew upon the tender herb.' We once more expressed our mutual affection at the close of the service, and said good-bye. The Lord bless you, my dear, dear flock!"

The next day (Monday, Feb. 15th, 1830), oppressed in heart with emotions of a very mingled character, he left a spot endeared to him by memories and associations of the highest and most sacred kind, sprinkled with some of a darker hue. That his feelings should be strong and chequered can be no matter of surprise, if we advert to the manner of his first coming to Manchester, the remarkable success that accompanied his ministration; and if we observe that each member of his church, almost without an exception, was the immediate fruits of his own faithful labour. Perhaps there is hardly a parallel case to be found. Nor can we wonder, that a few years later, when alluding to the subject, in a letter to his daughter K., he should write—

"To be obliged to leave Manchester, cost me more uneasiness than perhaps any event of my life. I struggled against it for full three years, and resisted the oft-repeated advice of my ministerial brethren and others, because it was in my heart to live and die amongst the people there. You were too young then to be informed of all that afflicted me; but I did not yield to the necessity, until the chapel affairs became so involved, that it was impossible for me to remain there any longer."

CHAPTER V.

LONDON CITY MISSION AGENCY.

> "Toiling—rejoicing—sorrowing—
> Onward through life he goes;
> Each morning sees some task begun,
> Each evening sees its close.
> Something attempted, something done,
> Has earned a night's repose."
>
> LONGFELLOW.

SECTION I.

FOR the information of some of our readers, it may be necessary to state very briefly the object of the London Christian Instruction Society, with whose operations the subject of our memoir was for a few years identified. As its name indicates, the aim of the Society is the Christian instruction or conversion of the people, and the means employed are, home visitation with religious tracts on the loan system, cottage, prayer, and exhortation meetings, and during the summer months, out-of-door or Tent-preaching on the Sabbath. For the accomplishment of these objects, associations are formed in connection with most of the dissenting churches in London; and one duty of their city missionary was to visit these associations periodically, with a word of advice, reproof, or encouragement, as the case might be, take part at their various preaching stations, and on the Sabbath more especially, to engage in the proclamation of the gospel, compelling the outcast and the wanderers to come in, that the Lord's house might be filled. It is easy to perceive that such services were, in many respects, similar to those of Mr. Pyer's earlier experience, and he entered upon them, with an earnest desire to be made increasingly useful in this particular department of service.

It was deemed advisable by the Committee to ratify the union by a public service. Their reasons for so doing are thus stated, in the preface of the published address of the Rev. Joseph Fletcher upon the occasion :—

"In this great city the Christian public have often witnessed, with feelings of deepest interest, the solemn designation of missionaries and evangelists, to the work of Christian instruction amongst the neglected population of remote and rural districts in our own country, or amongst the yet more benighted inhabitants of heathen cities, in different parts of the earth. While these scenes have again and again excited the holiest sympathies of the most devout minds in this city, the moral wants of the appalling myriads who inhabit its crowded streets, and throng its Sabbath walks, have been strangely forgotten; and the necessity of employing, in behalf of this ignorant and depraved population, an agency like that sent forth to Pagans at home and abroad, has for years been disregarded. It has devolved on the Christian Instruction Society, if not to originate, yet to accomplish, that important object, and, amongst other instrumentality it employs for the moral and religious improvement of the metropolitan population, to place in the first class a devoted and laborious city missionary. Directed, as they trust, by a gracious Providence, to the Rev. John Pyer, who relinquished an important station in Manchester, that he might undertake the more erratic and toilsome duties of this agency, the Committee felt that it was alike due to their esteemed brother, to the claims of the Society, and their own best feelings, that a special public service should be held, to implore the Divine benediction upon this novel and important enterprise, and to offer before the great congregation, those solemn exhortations to their newly-chosen evangelist, which the circumstances of his present sphere of labour might suggest."

The service was held on Wednesday evening, April 21st, 1830, at Claremont Chapel, Pentonville, attended by a crowded audience. Mr. Pyer's memorial of the event runs thus :—

"May the solemn transactions of this day be never erased from my memory! I have been solemnly recognized and set apart as a missionary to the guilty inhabitants of this great city. O my God and Saviour, what a charge!—what a work! How necessary that I should every moment look to Thee, and be every moment kept by Thee, lest I should disgrace my holy profession, or neglect any part of my duty! Keep me, keep me, O Lord! Mr. Dyer, Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, introduced the service by reading the

1st chapter of Isaiah, and 10th of Romans, and offering prayer. Dr. Bennet then delivered a discourse on the moral claims of London, founded on Acts xvi. 12—'Which is the chief city.' Mr. Blackburn proposed the questions and received my replies, Dr. Cox offered the special prayer, and Mr. Joseph Fletcher gave me the charge from Luke xiv. 23—'Compel them to come in,' etc. The whole service was delightfully interesting, and parts of it were to me quite overpowering. Oh! that henceforward I may become a new man, a devoted Christian, a faithful and successful minister of righteousness."

His replies to the *questions* alluded to above, are of an interesting character; but the facts they embody, having been already placed before our readers in a more desultory and detached form, their repetition is unnecessary. Wishing, as far as possible, that Mr. Pyer should be his own biographer, we will again subjoin a few extracts from his journal, relating to this new and important period of his history:—

"Lord's Day, May 2.—Went at seven to Fleet Market. Mr. Spicer and some of his friends had kindly supplied a temporary pulpit, on which I stood; and as many had assembled and were waiting, they soon gathered round, and we commenced our solemn and delightful service. The company kept increasing throughout the service, and formed altogether an interesting multitude of not less than 1500 persons, all of whom, with one or two slight exceptions, stood with solemn stillness, and heard with breathless attention. Many who had not 'seen it on this fashion' before were surprised and delighted, and my own heart seemed to be so encouraged, that I published for preaching there again next Sabbath. At three, and a quarter past six, preached in the Tent in White Conduit Fields. Larger and more attentive congregations than this day fortnight, and some tokens for good.

"Lord's Day, June 27.—His Majesty George IV. having died yesterday, and everyone being more or less affected by the solemn occurrence, I thought it best to discourse to-day upon the awful realities of death and judgment. This I did at Farringdon Market in the morning, and at White Conduit Fields afternoon and evening. Large congregations, about 1000 in the morning; still as midnight, and much affected, even to tears. Surely all the seed will not be scattered in vain.

"Lord's Day, Jan. 23 (1831).—Walked to Paddington after dinner, and preached afternoon and evening at the Boatman's chapel. While preaching in the evening, a poor woman suddenly shrieked out for mercy. Thinking she was seized with some bodily ailment, and about to faint, I desired she might be removed to the vestry. Here I found her after the service, not disordered in body, but mentally distressed, and agitated with a sense of her sins. I directed her to the all-sufficient Saviour, and the promises of God's mercy through Him. This was, upon the whole, the very best season I have had in preaching, since my connection with the Christian Instruction Society. The word was given; it seemed to fall with power, amidst the deepest attention, interrupted only by the sobs and tears of many, both male and female. May fruit be gathered into the kingdom above! Greatly exhausted and fatigued when I got home; but full of gracious consolation. Surely I serve a gracious Master.

"Lord's Day, March 6.—A considerable portion of labour devolved upon me to-day. After breakfast I walked to Shepherd's Market, and preached at eleven and three; then walked to the Borough, and at half-past five, preached in an upper room to a number of poor persons who have been thrown upon the parish, and who are employed by an individual in some kind of manufacture. They heard with attention, and expressed gratitude for my visit. Preached at seven to another company of poor people in Wilson's Court, near Barclay's brewery. These places are under the visitation and management of the Association connected with Mr. Arundel's church. After this service, walked home to Pentonville, and was much fatigued; but happy in my soul, and thankful for such opportunities of seeking to spread the knowledge of Christ.

"Thursday, March 3.—Walked from Mortlake (where his daughters were then at school); passed through the crowd assembled to witness the attendance at the Queen's drawing-room, and saw many of the nobility, foreign ambassadors, officers of state, etc. The day being fine, the show was splendid, and multitudes were attracted by the gorgeous scene. I saw too, but cannot say I was charmed or gratified. There is another court, a more brilliant assemblage, a purer society—to the bliss of that better pavilion my heart aspires; and though unentitled to admission into the royal presence here, there, through the merits of the Redeemer, I shall be a welcome guest. Glory be to Thee, O my Saviour and my God! Went to Silver Street in the evening. A scene of great confusion. The infidels, stung to madness, assembled in large numbers, and when the chapel was completely crammed, they thronged together in a mass about the door and in the passage, and in a variety of strange and noisy behaviour, offered many interruptions to the service. Once or twice I interposed, and restored order. The Doctor (Bennet) then gave notice, that if interrupted again, he should close the service. This kept them quiet for half an hour or more. They then broke loose again, and the Doctor abruptly concluded. Now their rage was intolerable, and many attempts were made by Taylor and others, to induce the Doctor to resume the subject, or to draw him into a discussion, but without effect. Having possession of the passage and doorway, they refused to withdraw, thinking they should force us to yield to their clamour. The congregation were exhorted to bear this patiently. They did so, and several of us did our best to induce them to withdraw. After an hour's persuasion they gave way, and allowed the assembly within the chapel to retire; not, however, before they had shown the debasing, brutalizing effect of the spirit of infidelity; for such hardened, self-willed, obstinate resistance of all that was kind, and civil, and gentlemanly, I never witnessed on any previous occasion. The Kingswood colliers are gentlemen, compared to the London brutes and bears, who profess themselves disciples of Taylor, and who infest the Rotunda.

"Monday, March 28.—Greatly exhausted and fatigued to-day, not only in consequence of yesterday's preaching exertions (three times, at Old Gravel Lane, Jewry Street, and Shadwell), but from having had to walk such long distances. This is as trying to the physical powers as the labour of preaching, and yet I do not see how it can be remedied in my case, unless, indeed, I could feel free to hire cabs, or ride in the 'busses from place to place on the Lord's Day. But I cannot consent in this way to desecrate the Sabbath, and to assist and countenance others in doing so. I suppose this, among other things, must be submitted to God in prayer. Went this afternoon to Brunswick Street, Mile-End Road. Took tea with the visitors and friends of the Christian Instruction Association, and presided at their meeting for conference on the results of their past year's exertions, and the best means of securing future prosperity. Harmony and good-will prevailed; all rejoiced in what had been accomplished, and appeared quite inclined to renew their efforts in the good cause.

"Thursday, April 14.—Greatly delighted this forenoon at the examination of the boys in the British and Foreign School, in the Borough Road—Mr. Briscoe, M.P., in the chair. Mr. Burnet addressed the boys after the examination. An interesting feature in the proceedings of the morning was the separate examination of the Arab boys, who read a portion of Scripture, and answered a number of questions upon it, with wonderful facility and correctness. These boys, twelve in number, were sent to this country about fifteen months ago by the Pascha of Egypt, to learn the system of teaching pursued in this school, preparatory to its introduction into his dominions. The existence of the system he became acquainted with, doubtless by means of missionaries. I hope I felt thankful to God this day for being an Englishman, and much more for being a Christian. Rode to Hammersmith with Mr. P., and attended the anniversary of the association. Moved the first resolution, and spoke with some facility and a tolerable degree of comfort. Came home by eleven, weary but thankful.

"Wednesday, May 11.—A blessed discourse by Mr. Reed this morning, at Surrey Chapel, for the London Missionary Society; full of piety, rich in sentiment, beautiful in illustration, accompanied by an unction, and delivered with a pathos, truly overpowering. I never remember to have observed such deep attention in ministers, nor so many tears during the delivery of a missionary sermon. Surely good will follow. Amen.

"Lord's Day, May 22.—Laboured hard to-day; too hard, indeed, for my physical strength and comfort, though not without sensible tokens of the Divine presence, and a good hope that spiritual benefit was imparted to some. At seven I preached at Farringdon Street. Breakfasted at Mr. Spicer's, and then walked to Ratcliffe, and preached at Mr.

Hyatt's. After dinner I crossed the water, and preached in the Tent, Lower Deptford Road, at three, and half-past six, and then walked home to Islington; but so wearied, that I determined not to engage in four services in one day any more."

Business connected with Canal Street property, having taken him to Manchester in the summer of 1831, he had an opportunity of visiting once more his former flock, and many valued friends. Railroads were then in their infancy—the one between Manchester and Liverpool being, we believe, the first started in England. It is by no means uninteresting to mark the light in which they were then regarded, while realizing, as we do at the present day, far more than was even anticipated. Mr. Pyer writes from Liverpool:—

"Monday, June 6.—Accompanied Brother S. to Mr. R.'s, at Bellevue, where we dined, and then went by railway to Manchester. This is an astonishing undertaking, and the mode of travelling most delightful. In about an hour and a half we went the whole distance, thirty miles, and without half the noise, jolting, and uneasiness of a stage coach, and without any appearance of danger; though there were ten or twelve carriages and about 200 passengers. I have no doubt that railroads will become general in England in a few years, and that they will occasion a complete revolution in the commercial circumstances of the country.

"Lord's Day, June 12.—Heard Mr. M'All in the morning. In the afternoon, visited my dear Sunday school at Canal Street; and in the evening, preached to the people. These dear children and the remnants of my old flock still twine about my heart. Well, we shall presently meet in the heavenly Canaan. Some are gone before, we follow, and by and by, all will be brought home."

He composed the following hymn for their annual tea-meeting this year:—

"Blest were the times, in days of old,
When Israel's sons, a chosen race,
On Zion's mount, in raptures, told
The conquests of almighty grace.

"Blest was the time, when Christian bands
Went forth from David's holy hill,
And told Christ's love to Gentile lands,
And preached his truth and taught his will.

"Blest is the time, in these our days,
When joined in purpose and in plan,
We meet to spread the Saviour's praise,
And friendship's hallowed flame to fan.

"Teachers and friends of British youth—
Friends of our poor and wayward race,
We meet to hail the march of truth—
The glorious march of gospel grace.

"Millions already have been taught
In Sabbath schools to read his Word,
And millions more shall here be brought
To know, and love, and serve the Lord.

"Humble our labours, small our power,
Yet grace divine shall make them be
Forerunners, of that glorious hour,
When all shall God's salvation see."

On his return to London, his energies were again incessantly employed in the Lord's work, relieved occasionally by such recreations as the following entry details, when, in company with his daughters, who were home during their school vacation, he paid a visit to the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park :—

"Friday, July 8.—Many additions to the animals and birds have been made since I was last here. Of all the *lions* of the metropolis, this is the most rational, and glad was I to learn that the gardens are visited by such numbers—no less than 3000 yesterday. How much better than a visit to the opera, the theatre, or Vauxhall. Here health and amusement may be sought without the danger of pollution, and here the pious may be instructed in the wisdom and power of the Infinite Creator. 'Marvellous, indeed, are thy works, O Lord; the earth is full of thy goodness.'

"Lord's Day, July 10.—Preached at Farringdon Street at seven this morning, and intended to have proclaimed the Word on Islington Green in the afternoon, but was prevented by the rain. Between four and five it cleared up, so I went to Twigg Folly, Bethnal-Green Road, and, in one of our Tents, addressed a numerous and well-behaved congregation. Many of the poor weavers, with their families, were present, and some who are evidently unaccustomed to attend places of religious worship. It was pleasant to remark how these latter were overawed and kept in order, and it was still more gratifying to observe tears bedew many faces, and a fixed and serious attention in the countenance of the majority. I had comfort and liberty, both of thought and expression, in delivering the Word, and hope it was not preached in vain. After the service, a respectably-dressed female spoke to me, and told me, with considerable emotion, that I had been the means of leading her to the Saviour, when preaching in the Tent, in Hare Street Fields, ten years ago. She now resides at Hackney, and is a member of the Wesleyan Society. To God be all the glory.

"Lord's Day, July 17.—The very best season I have ever been favoured with, in preaching in Farringdon Street, was enjoyed by me this blessed Sabbath morning, and so it appeared to be among the people. Smiles and tears were seen on every hand throughout the whole service, and at its close several persons spoke with me, and expressed their high delight and devout thankfulness to God, for this season of grace and mercy. My heart covets such manifestations of divine power, and especially their sure results—the conversion of sinners to God. These I have been permitted to witness during other periods of my unworthy ministry, and why not now? O Lord, lay to thy hand! Preached in the afternoon on Islington Green. A considerable attendance and great quietness. The hackney-coachmen on the adjoining stand, heard with great attention; but I had no freedom in preaching. This is humbling to the spirit; but let God be glorified. He can bless his truth, whatever be the feelings of the preacher who declares it, and if He bless, the object I seek cannot fail of being secured. Had a better season in the Fields in the evening, though not equal to the morning. Surely I am every moment dependent upon Thee! The congregation in and around the Tent was very large, and the majority heard with the deepest attention.

"Lord's Day, July 31.—My mental and physical energies have been severely tested to-day by four laborious services, and I am made to feel that, strong as I am generally, it is possible to go too far. I had arranged to preach in Farringdon Street at seven, and in the Tent, in White Conduit Fields, at three, and half-past six, when, late Saturday evening, Mr. B. came to say they were without a supply for Jewry Street. I felt as though I could not refuse, concluding it might be a call of Providence, and that it was my duty to trust God with my health and the supply of strength equal to my day. I find, however, that prudence must be conjoined with zeal, and that, another time, it will be wiser even to refuse. I do not like this; but I cannot perform impossibilities. The heat has been oppressive to-day, particularly in the afternoon and evening; but the congregations were numerous, and deeply attentive, and my soul was drawn out in earnest desire to be instrumental in promoting their salvation; and hence all my energies were thrown into my subject, and I laboured on without any disposition to spare myself in the least. And will the Lord condescend to accept these humble endeavours, and succeed them with his blessing? Oh! that it might once be. I labour frequently, and I hope I may add sincerely; but where is the fruit? Yet let me not complain, lest my murmurings should prevent what my heart so constantly longs for and desires. His Word does not return void, though every instance of its success in particular, and of its results generally, is not known to me. Let me then be content to labour on, and wait for eternity to disclose what is now, for wise and sufficient reasons, concealed and obscure.

"Monday, August 1.—Sent my dear boy to Sutton to-day. When I had dispatched him, I walked towards Blackfriar's Bridge, to observe the crowds assembled to witness the splendid ceremony observed in opening the new London Bridge. I had not been long at the river's side, when I was recognized by a waterman—who was busily employed in rowing parties to the vessels moored in the river, for a station on which ten or twelve shillings were demanded—who earnestly entreated, to be allowed to put me on board a vessel with which he was connected, free of expense. Knowing nothing of the man, I resisted his importunity, and with some unwillingness, he departed. But he soon returned, and finding him still more urgent, I stepped into his boat, and he pushed off. 'Well, my good friend,' said I, 'what do you know of me? Where have you seen me?' 'Oh! sir,' he replied, 'I have heard you preach in Farringdon Street, and right glad have I been to hear you there, and exceedingly proud I am to have you in my boat. And now, sir, when it is all over, I'll come and fetch you again, and it shan't cost you a farthing.' He kept his word, and seemed better pleased than though he had been paid ever so handsomely. I had no opportunity of ascertaining whether he had derived any special benefit from the preaching; but I could not but be struck with this instance of grateful feeling, and was particularly impressed, with the honest pride of the man in showing me a kindness, and in the true independence of spirit he manifested, when, on putting me ashore, I offered him remuneration, he nobly refused it. The scene was altogether of the most splendid description; but to me the most imposing circumstance of the whole, was the vast mass of human beings, of all grades, classes, and characters, congregated together, and kept in orderly and decent behaviour, partly, indeed, by civic regulations; but principally and mainly by that strong good sense and correct feeling, which are so characteristic of Englishmen. I gazed upon these hosts of the community with deepest interest; and while I felt proud of my country, and thankful for my blessings and privileges, was impressed with the solemn importance of that period, when the entire human family shall stand at the judgment-seat, and shall even then find their inconceivable number augmented by the mighty hosts of hell and heaven! King William was the chief attraction to-day; but there King Jesus, on his great white throne, high and lifted up, shall be seen by every eye, and shall be either hailed or dreaded by every human spirit. May I meet Him to my comfort in that day!

"Lord's Day, August 14.—Preached in Farringdon Street at seven this morning, and in the Tent in White Conduit Fields in the evening. Large congregations, deep attention, and much personal comfort in preaching. Surely all will not be in vain. The Word will not altogether return void; some good will result. So I believe; but my eyes long to see it. I cannot forget what I was permitted to witness at Bedminster in 1815; at Dursley, Wootton, Frampton, Kingswood, and Bristol, in 1819 and 1820; at Manchester in 1821; and at Liverpool in 1823, as well as in other places; and hence I long to witness outpourings of the Holy Spirit as I was then permitted to, and consequently the frequent and speedy conversion of sinners to God. Lord, why is it Thou dost not work with me as in times past? Is it that my eye is less single now than then?—that my motives are less pure?—that I am, by my personal sinfulness, a hindrance to the work rather than a help? Oh! search me, and prove me; discover and remove every wicked way that is in me, and then work in me and by me more powerfully and evidently than hitherto, that I may witness glorious revivals of religion; and, if it please Thee, be instrumental in their promotion. Amen.

"Lord's Day, August 21.—My unreasonable fears have been silenced, and my cowardice put to the blush, by the gracious goodness of my heavenly Father this day. How often, and in how many condescending ways, does He say to me, 'Be not faithless, but believing.' The Tent at Camberwell was well attended, and by such characters as we sought to benefit—the dealers and others who have booths and standings in the fair. I had liberty and comfort in preaching Jesus to them, and, with scarcely an exception, they listened with marked attention. At three, Mr. P. of Peckham, preached. He delivered a plain discourse from Acts viii. 5;

but, crippled by his high notions, studiously avoided addressing himself positively and practically to any but believers. I was sorry for this, and so were all our friends. Without referring to the matter, in a following address I endeavoured to rectify his mistake, by showing that the preaching of the gospel, was in fact the offer of mercy and salvation from God to every creature, and then pressed upon all, the absolute necessity of examining for themselves, and submitting to the claims of the gospel. My heart warmed and was enlarged while speaking, and the tears and smiles of many, witnessed how acceptable the good news of the gospel was to their waiting spirits. In the evening the place was again crowded. A few serious persons attended to conduct the singing; but the majority were evidently such as make no profession, and perhaps do not constantly attend any place of religious worship. It was, therefore, the more remarkable to observe how these men were arrested by the Word, and held, from the commencement to the close of a long service, in breathless silence, while I endeavoured, first, to expose the absurdity of all attempts to conceal or deny our sinfulness; and, secondly, to urge the necessity of an immediate and frank confession of our individual guilt, and a hearty and thankful acceptance of salvation, as revealed in the glorious gospel. Blessed be God, He was my gracious support in this deeply-interesting service. . . . .
To be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, is the utmost point of my most unbounded desires. For this I would spend and be spent. Lord, give me

this desire of my heart, by fitting me for the work, and blessing me in it.

"Lord's Day, Aug. 28.—The congregation at Farringdon Street this morning, was more numerous than it is in general; the morning was beautifully fine, and the whole service of a truly encouraging kind. I had no lack either of thoughts or words, and found more calmness of spirit, and greater command of myself and my subject, than I ordinarily do. At the close, we distributed nearly 600 tracts to the congregation, yet many were unsupplied, showing that we must have had from 600 to 700 people present. At three, and half-past six, I preached in the Tent at White Conduit Fields. In the afternoon, as in the morning, I was comforted both in the matter and manner of my preaching, and by the deep and earnest attention of the people. Surely such services and such tokens for good, must be productive of benefit in some way. God hath said, 'His Word shall not return void;' and on this declaration—this faithful promise—I would continually rely. When speaking in the evening on the parable of the wheat and tares, I was enabled to say some strong things, yet, I hope, in the spirit of the gospel. I find, however, that casual hearers, who gather round the more steady part of the congregation in White Conduit Fields in large numbers, are usually more fixed by exhibitions of the love of God in the gift of the Saviour, and invitations to receive gospel blessings, than they are by annunciations of the just judgments of Jehovah upon the finally impenitent; and hence, when the former subjects are dwelt upon, numbers remain on the outside of the Tent listening attentively, but when the latter are introduced, they almost as invariably slip away. This shows how necessary it is to have wisdom from above to guide in the choice of suitable subjects, and prudence to regulate the manner of handling them. 'Tis said, 'He that *winneth* souls is wise;' and wisdom to win souls is especially necessary for an out-door preacher. I remember the time when my zeal would have said, in such a case, Give no quarter to the enemy; but I have lived long enough to discover, that it is best to seek to disarm men's prejudices, if by that means a way may be made to their hearts, for the grace and mercy of the gospel. Still I trust I have no disposition to keep back any part of the truth. What I want to be saved from, is the danger of mingling the unhallowed fire of my own spirit with the righteousness of the Divine justice, and never to speak of the vengeance of God against sin, and sinful men, but in the temper of Him who, when He beheld the devoted city, wept over it, and said, 'Oh, that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.' Thus, blessed Saviour, give me to feel, when I tell sinners of thy coming wrath, and warn them of their danger.

"Tuesday, Oct. 11.—A poor man called on me to-day, to whom it would seem the Word at Collier's Rents has been made useful. He has been greatly afflicted and much distressed, and was strongly tempted to lay violent hands upon himself; but came to hear me preach, and was prevented. I have recommended him to the care of our friends in that neighbourhood, and trust he will prove to be a brand plucked from the burning.

"Tuesday, Oct. 25.—Attended Mr. Burnet's lecture at Tonbridge—a masterly performance, delivered with the greatest ease, and in a manner most convincing. Really Mr. B. is an extraordinary man. Without writing notes even of the shortest description, he seems to be in perfect possession of himself and his subject, and continues to pour out a stream of instruction, with the greatest ease and uncommon impressiveness. Everywhere, and on all subjects, he seems to be equally at home.

"Tuesday, Feb. 21 (1832).—Assembled with the Congregational Board at twelve, for humiliation before God, and conference on the line of duty to be observed, now that the cholera has made its appearance in the metropolis. A meeting of some interest. All were of one sentiment as to the fitness and propriety of visiting the sick and dying, whereever and whenever called upon to do so. Mr. G. Clayton related the following:—Some years ago, he was called up in the night to go and visit a man, said to be in dying circumstances. It was winter, cold and frosty, and the snow lay thick upon the ground. After consulting with Mrs. C., he rose, dressed, and, taking a lantern in his hand, accompanied the servant who had called him up, and presently found the sick man, who appeared to be in an agony of mind, and needing spiritual consolation and guidance. He conversed and prayed with him, and, directing him to the Saviour, left him. He visited him several times afterwards, and in a few days the man died. Sometime after, a widow lady and her two daughters presented themselves to his notice, and desired admission to his church. He inquired their names, and was told it was Martyn. Further inquiries brought out that they were relatives of the deceased man he had visited; that that individual was the brother of dear Henry Martyn, the missionary; and that Mr. C.'s visits to their sick relative, had been blessed of God to their spiritual enlightenment and edification. They became members of Mr. C.'s church; and this circumstance led eventually to his friendship with the late Mr. Thornton, treasurer of the Church Missionary Society, and the friend of Henry Martyn.

"Tuesday, March 6.—Was privileged to-night to hear from Mr. B., at Surrey Chapel, one of the most powerful and impressive lectures I ever listened to, on the internal evidences of the Bible. He brought forward a mass of the most interesting matter, all excellently arranged, and delivered with such simplicity and clearness, as rendered the whole of the most convincing character. Happy should I be to possess such a discourse in print, but I fear Mr. B. will not be prevailed on to publish. I have very copious notes, and hope in a day or two to write it pretty much at length.

"Friday, April 6.—Went to Kentish Town in the morning, and in the evening attended a meeting of the Temperance Society, at Brunswick Chapel, Mile-End Road, and heard a lecture by Cruickshanks, a man of extraordinary natural ability, and one likely to make considerable impression in regard to the subject upon persons of his own class. I am glad to find the cause advancing. If it proceeds here as it has done in America, we may hope that one of our national vices will be obliterated, and a most confounding obstacle to the spread of religion be removed out of the way.

"Tuesday, May 22.—Remained at home yesterday, and not without occasion, being much fatigued with the labours of the Sabbath. I find I cannot bear so much exertion as I could ten years ago. Then nothing seemed to overcome me; and often, after many days of travelling and preaching, I have smiled to see my old friend Pocock completely knocked up, while I have been blithe as a lark. At those seasons I have often been admonished to spare myself, and have been assured I should one day be painfully conscious of the consequences of such exertions; but such advice I have never been able to take. To spend and be spent in the service of my adorable Redeemer has been my desire; and whatever estimate may have been formed of my endeavours by others, I can only look upon them as poor, cold, weak, and imperfect; not at all commensurate with the object and end of the service; yet such as I had to offer, which, I trust, has been done with a sincere desire to do good, and to glorify Him who is Lord of all I have and all I am. To-day attended the meeting of the Temperance Society, in Exeter Hall—the Bishop of London in the chair. Many of the speeches were excellent, particularly the chairman's, Captain Brenton's, Dr.

Bennett's, and the Rev. J. M'Lean's. Preached at White Row in the evening. A calm and blessed opportunity."

From a letter written to his eldest daughter, then at school, we make the following extract, its touching allusions to what has now become *reality*, being of the deepest and most affecting interest :—

"ISLINGTON, *June* 9, 1832.

"MY DEAR C.— . . . . It does not surprise me to find you meditating upon the *last* occurrences at school. The *last* of anything as well as the *first* is often an event of great importance. 'Tis this which gives solemnity and grandeur to the *last* day, and causes that day to stand out in bold and prominent relief from all the other days which God has made. I was struck the other day, in passing a print shop, with a plate representing the 'Last Man'—a single and solitary being, looking out alone upon the ravages of time and the desolations of the universe. I sometimes think, too, of my own last hour, and endeavour to realize the solemn circumstances which shall surround me when heaving my last breath, taking my last look, pronouncing my last adieu! I am not disposed to indulge gloomy anticipations in reference to this event; for generally (blessed be God for his goodness) my confidence in that gracious Saviour, who has so abundantly blessed me all my life long, is unbroken and unshaken; but then I cannot help sometimes almost wishing to know, under what circumstances I shall leave time and enter upon eternity. *How, when,* *where* shall I die? Who will witness my dissolution? Will my dear children behold and survive that stroke? Will they be permitted to smooth for me the bed of death, and will they share then my *last* benediction and blessing? I said above, I do not indulge the gloom of melancholy when I thus reflect and conjecture. No, blessed be God, I believe and I find that 'Religion's ways are ways of pleasantness, and her paths are paths of peace.' The service of God is a *reasonable* service; and it is our own fault if, both living and dying, we are not cheered and comforted with the faith, and hope, and rich consolation of the blessed and glorious gospel. Oh! my dear child, let us remember that all events are in the hands of our *Father*—our *heavenly Father*. Now, if *I*, as your earthly parent, had the absolute disposal of you, and all belonging to you, both in life and at death, do you not think I should, in the arrangement of your affairs, consult your best interests, and seek your highest welfare? Undoubtedly. Well, then, remember all these are in the hand of your Father who is in heaven; and forasmuch as He loves you in Christ Jesus infinitely beyond what it is possible for me to do, most assuredly He *will* do for you all things well. This reasoning I apply to myself, and this is enough to destroy all melancholy forebodings. . . . . Real religion is the true source of man's happiness; and he who has peace of mind through the enjoyment of the Divine favour, may rest assured, that through life, in death, and for ever, *all things* work together for his good."

Diary. "Wednesday, July 11 (1832).—Spent the forenoon in the city; rode to Hammersmith after tea with Mr. and Mrs. P., and attended the anniversary of the Association—a pleasant and encouraging meeting, and, thank God, freedom in speaking. In returning, rode on the box with the driver, and sought to interest his attention about eternal things. The evening was delightfully calm, and the ride, our conversation, and the object of our visit calculated to call up pleasant recollections; for, amid all the scathing and bitterness of my protracted affliction, it has been my favoured lot to enjoy many happy hours, in the company of congenial spirits, amidst the gay and beautiful scenery of my native land, and in the most interesting work in the world. Some of these dear friends are gone before me to the better world; from others, localities and circumstances divide me. Yet God has graciously raised up those who, in some degree, supply their absence, and the work of his truth and gospel is yet my delightful occupation. What motives are here for a thankful heart!

"Monday, July 30.—Feeble and frail is this poor mortal frame of mine; subject to great weakness and exhaustion, as the result of my Sabbath labours, especially when I am led to exert myself as I did yesterday, and, in addition, have to walk considerable distances. Some ministers take it very easy. This I never could do, nor am I now disposed to begin. All the world is in earnest; why should not the ministers of Christ be so too? What burning zeal did Christ and his holy apostles display!

And shall I be cold and heartless in my Master's vineyard? Oh! no. Rather let me pray for greater ardour, greater devotedness, greater energy of spirit, even though this poor body should be worn down and consumed, and speedily consigned to the grave."

In a measure, to recruit his exhausted strength, he spent a week or two with his relatives in Berkshire, in October, and thus closes the year.

"December 31, 1832.—Wrote to several old friends at Manchester to-day, and endeavoured to look back, not only on scenes and circumstances connected with my intercourse with them; but also on those which passed away long before I knew either them or the town in which they dwell. Oh! how swiftly has my life hitherto fled away, and how little have I done. I seem to be always beginning —always purposing, planning, contriving, resolving, and yet, on a review, to be always disappointed. Perfection is eagerly desired, and pursued, but not attained. Not, indeed, that I ever expect *absolute* perfection in this imperfect state; yet I see much that might be done which is now omitted, and much that should be avoided which is, alas! too eagerly pursued. But for the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, I should sink into despondency. The precious blood of the atonement, however, revives my drooping spirits, and cheers me on in my feeble pursuit of real and increasing conformity to the will of my great Lord and Redeemer. Oh! to awake with his likeness! How blessed, how satisfying must that be! Such bliss my soul desires, and, in another state of being, hopes fully to attain. Then it matters little how long, or how short my stay on earth may be. If I go down to a good old age, He is able to keep me and guide me all the way, and to grant me rest at the end; and should I be soon removed to the world of spirits, still all would be well. In peace I close the year; in peace may my pilgrimage at length terminate.

"Saturday, July 20 (1833).—A meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society at Exeter Hall. Many Members of Parliament present. The object, to obtain some modification in the Government plan for the Abolition of Colonial Slavery. A West Indian proprietor interrupted the proceedings, and was allowed to be heard; but, poor fellow, what a castigation he brought upon himself, particularly from Mr. O'Connell. He made many attempts to interrupt, but the chairman (Lord Suffield), Mr. Buxton, and others, prevented him. Left at four o'clock, the meeting still continuing. Some of the proposals made, I expect Government will listen to; but that they will consent to all, I have no hope. Yet slavery will be abolished; the hateful system will be crushed for ever. Thank heaven for its consummation.

"Monday, Sept. 9.—The labours and long walks of yesterday unfitted me for much activity to-day, and added to previous loss of appetite and indigestion. The retirement and rest I so much need are, however, as I pleasantly anticipate, near at hand; and, with them and the Divine blessing, I trust my health will recover its usual tone. Read and wrote most of the day, and found them edifying employments. I think I have an increasing desire to be holy—to be entirely devoted to God—to live as I never have yet done—possessed continually of a desire to be thankful; but much, very much more, needs to be accomplished. Work in me, blessed Saviour, by the sanctifying energy of the Holy Ghost, and subdue every faculty, and power, and principle of my entire nature, to thyself. Thus I would daily pray."

The above intimation of "rest and retirement" was found, soon after, in a visit to his early and attached friends, Mr. and Mrs. George Smith, then resident at Plymouth. His journal contains many interesting accounts of country rambles, and social festivities in this charming county, which doubtless tended to renovate his health and spirits, and of which he says—"I enjoy the delightful scenery, and hope in it I enjoy my God and Father, the maker and sustainer of the whole." The following letter will supply information concerning this visit, and is a fair specimen of his epistolary style:—

"PLYMOUTH, *Sept.* 24, 1833.

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,—When I left home I admonished you not to be too eager in your expectation of news from me; and I am glad I did so, as I have been prevented till now the delightful task of communicating with you. Nevertheless, though absent, you have not been forgotten. No day passes without a kind and sympathetic remembrance of my dear children, and frequently you are the subjects of remark between me and the dear friends, with whom

I now am. My prayers, too, ascend for you, and my hope is that you are happy in your own souls, and exercising the grace conferred upon you, in the service and to the honour of our great and gracious Redeemer. You will be glad to hear that I am much better; that I am surrounded with all which tends to soothe, and comfort, and cheer my heart. Thus much in the general; but as I apprehend you anticipate receiving from me a variety of particulars, I will throw what I have to say into a journalized form, and by this means you will see more clearly where I have been, and how employed, during my stay in Devon.

"Wednesday, Sept. 11.—I left town by the Telegraph coach soon after five o'clock, and had a most rapid, and not altogether unpleasant journey to Exeter, where we arrived at half-past ten precisely. The distance is 176 miles. We came at the rate of nearly twelve miles an hour; twenty minutes were allowed us for breakfast, and half an hour for dinner; but by the superior management of all the arrangements, such as changing horses quickly, dragging the wheel when necessary without stopping the coach, carrying but a limited number of passengers, no luggage but what belonged to such as travelled by the coach, etc., the journey was performed with the greatest ease, and all were agreed in the conclusion, that it was altogether the best conveyance of the kind by which they had travelled.

"Thursday, Sept. 12.—After a good night's rest, for which I was well prepared, I rose about eight o'clock, and had a pleasant ramble through and around the city of Exeter, which, since I was there in 1816, has been increased in all directions. I returned to make a hearty breakfast between ten and eleven, and at one o'clock started for Plymouth, where I arrived about half-past six. This was a most delightful ride through a most beautiful country, covered with luxuriant verdure, and presenting the most varied prospects I ever beheld. This was particularly the case from the ascent of Haldon Hill, about nine miles from Exeter, around which many miles of country are stretched out in an almost boundless prospect, studded with gentleman's seats, and intersected with the windings of the river Exe, from the city to Topsham, and from thence to Exmouth, where it is met by and swallowed up in the ocean. Mr. S. was in the country when I arrived, but his good wife did all in her power to make me comfortable; and I hope I felt sincere gratitude to my heavenly Father for his preserving goodness and care, by which I was brought in safety and peace to the abode of my friends.

"Friday.—Mr. S. came home, and, after enjoying a long chat with him that evening, and a visit to the harbour, etc., on the following morning; I set off on Saturday afternoon for Totness, twenty-two miles distant, where Mr. S. had made an engagement for me to preach, Mr. Tarbotton, their minister, being ill. Totness is a pretty town, situated on the slope of a hill, in a most lovely and picturesque country, at the head of the river Dart. On the Sabbath I preached here three times, and again on the Monday evening. Had gracious seasons, and found favour in the sight of the people, who were exceedingly kind. I remained at the house of J. W., Esq. On Monday and Tuesday, I walked with this gentleman around the town, in several directions, and for several miles; and certainly was never more highly gratified with natural scenery, than on these occasions. Tuesday afternoon, I returned to Plymouth, and supped with Mr. and Mrs. S. at Mr. D. D.'s, one of Mr. S.'s deacons. Wednesday, we dined and spent the evening at Mr. C.'s, another of Mr. S.'s deacons. Thursday, at Mr. P.'s. This evening Mr. S. preached his usual week-day lecture. Friday, we accompanied a party to Mount Edgecombe, the seat and grounds of the Earl who takes his title from this place. The day was beautiful, the company charming, and everything tended to cheer and animate the scene. After a pleasant sail across the harbour, and a ramble through the grounds, we sat in an alcove on one of the highest points of the Mount, and partook of our refreshments, then sung some hymns, and at the same time enjoyed the varied and magnificent views which earth and ocean, nature and art, laid at our feet. The breakwater was just below us, and the fishing-boats in the harbour, and the numerous vessels in the distance, gave animation and variety to the scene. Another ramble took us round the mountain, and brought us to our landing point, where we took boat, and then went to spend the evening at a ladies' school, the principals and pupils of which attend Mr. S.'s ministry. Here we had some music and singing, and thus concluded the day. Saturday, we dined and took tea with Mr. and Mrs. D., senior, and returned early to prepare for the Sabbath. On this day I preached for Mr. S. in the afternoon, and at the Baptist chapel in the evening. Yesterday afternoon we attended the laying the foundation-stone of a new chapel for seamen and soldiers. Mr. S. delivered an address, and I closed the service. In the evening, I gave an address at their usual weekly prayer-meeting. To-day at three o'clock, we are engaged to dine with some friends at Mr. G.'s, another of the deacons. Thus you have an outline of my engagements and occupations since I have been here; full particulars must, however, be reserved till we are privileged again to converse. Mr. S., who is sitting at the opposite side of the table, says, 'Give my love to the children, and say, I hope they will come next summer and see me.' Whether this will occur or not, time will show. But should you be privileged with the opportunity, I am sure you will be surprised and gratified beyond measure with the beauty, the grandeur, the luxuriance of this most delightful country. I have seen nothing like it, nothing to be compared with it in any part of the kingdom besides. 'Tis a glorious land, and the kindness of the people here is above all praise. Mr. S. is, I think, much improved, and his popularity in Plymouth is at present unbounded. Mrs. S. and the dear children are well, and join with me in love to you. . . .

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

To this characteristic letter might be added some interesting and amusing details of a rapid run through Cornwall—such, for instance, as the astonishment of an old gentleman at Grampound, who, on being asked what was the name of the town, looked unutterable things, and seemed half disposed to be angry, saying, "What! don't you know, then?" "No, indeed, sir; I am a stranger to Cornwall." He still appeared to doubt, and presently, with great self-importance, stammered out, "Why, sir, this is Grampound, the ancientest borough in all the world!" "I ceased to wonder," adds Mr. Pyer, "at his indignation, for, alas! poor old rotten Grampound has lost its ancient right of sending members to Parliament. What a reproach to my country, that the farce should have continued so long." One more extract shall suffice—his visit to Mount's Bay.

"In the afternoon I had a delightful walk along the head of Mount's Bay. The rain had cleared off, but the wind blew tremendously off the shore, and, meeting the flowing tide, occasioned a heavy surf, which showed itself in a towering foam along the whole extent of the bay, till within a few yards of the shore, when the wind with which it had long struggled got beneath, and expanding the body of water into an extended sheet, tipped the topmost edge with a silvery whiteness, and then threw the whole dash upon the sand, up whose still and smooth surface the billow eagerly ran for at least twenty or thirty yards. I was pleased to observe, also, the tide dashing about among the rocks at the foot of St. Michael's Mount; but it was too stormy to venture across in a boat, so I went on to Marazion," etc., etc.

Returning to London through Bristol, he takes the opportunity of visiting his parents' grave, "where," said he, "lie my father, mother, two infant sisters (one of whom I never knew), my dear brother George, and sister Elizabeth. These last, and my dear mother, I knew as Christians; hence their memory is doubly dear. I expect to meet them in the morning of the resurrection; but whether my bones will rest with theirs is very uncertain, and a matter of no moment. Only let the spirit be saved by the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and then, wherever the body be deposited, it shall be recovered in the great day of the Lord."

SECTION II.

After this brief respite, Mr. Pyer returned with renewed ardour to his onerous duties in the metropolis; and the New Year (1834) had scarcely opened before he was admonished, "by a violent pain in the region of the heart, which lasted several hours, and nearly deprived him of the power of breathing," that his flesh was mortal. In the month of May his summer campaign of Tent and open-air services was resumed.

"Lord's Day, May 4.—Opened my commission once more, by preaching in Farringdon Street in the open air at seven o'clock this morning; had a numerous and attentive auditory. In the afternoon and evening, commenced Tent-preaching at Twigg Folly. The first of these services was a very gracious one, and in the last I felt liberty; but fear too much of my own spirit prevailed. How important in preaching the Word of Christ, to be filled with the spirit of Christ! Tired when I got home, but thankful for the high and holy privileges of the day, and all their accompanying blessings.

"May 11.—Much reason to rejoice in the blessedness which seemed to be poured out upon my own soul, and the souls of the poor people in Farringdon Street this morning. The Word appeared to be with power. Deep attention, frequent smiles of gladness, and abundance of tears, told the emotions of the people, while I declared, 'Neither is there salvation in any other,' etc. Many testified their approbation at the close; and good Mr. S., when shaking me by the hand, said, 'he felt as the Gentiles did, when they desired that the same words might be spoken to them the next Sabbath Day.' May eternal good follow. Afternoon and evening preached at the Tent in the Lower Deptford Road, and thus commenced the services in this quarter. Very pleased to see several who have been benefited by our ministrations at this place on former occasions, and among the rest the good woman who was impressed the summer before last, while hearing me preach from 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' She was taking a careless walk with her husband, when the voice of the preacher attracted her attention, and she proposed to her husband to turn into the Tent. He consented, and they heard, and in her case at least, blessed results have followed. To God be glory.

"Wednesday, May 28 (1834).—At the opening of the new Weigh House chapel, Mr. J. A. James gave us an appropriate sermon from "And there they preached the gospel.' Simple, yet striking; clear, sound, forcible, and delivered in such a manner as to convince all, that the preacher was aiming to do you good. I was glad that my dear boy, having a holiday, was enabled to be with us. We highly enjoyed the service, and I trust were spiritually benefited. A large number of ministers and gentlemen dined together afterwards at the London Tavern, where some good speeches were made, and great harmony prevailed. At eight o'clock I preached to a few serious persons in Bird Court, and greatly enjoyed the service."

The foregoing extracts will be sufficient to show how laboriously Mr. Pyer toiled; seldom less than *three,* often *four* times on the Sabbath was he found proclaiming the Word of Life to listening crowds; while engagements of lesser magnitude filled up nearly every evening of the week. Such incessant toil, is quite enough to account for the weariness and exhaustion of which he complained, to say nothing of the addition of long and fatiguing walks. His hitherto strong and robust frame, now gave frequent indications of frailty, and we are inclined to think his own supposition on this matter was correct, as upon one of these occasions he writes:—

" Ten or fifteen years ago, my physical strength appeared to be equal to almost every kind of labour, and hence I could preach three times on the Sabbath, and almost every night in the week, and walk or ride scores of miles without being much inconvenienced; but I cannot do so now. Then I was lavish of my strength; now I suffer for it."

Such reflections may act as salutary cautions, to those who allow their youthful zeal to outstrip prudence. As we have already seen, he obtained a respite from his hard work, by change of air and scene in the fall of the year; but it soon became a question with him, whether he should not seek a less laborious sphere of labour, at the same time committing his way to God in earnest prayer. To this decision he was also advised by some of his friends, particularly so by the one he had recently visited in Devonshire, and who soon had an opportunity of naming him to a destitute church, in the northern part of the county. His probationary services at South Molton made a deep and wonderful impression; and before he left the town, a deputation waited upon him, with a most urgent application that he would become their pastor. He promised to think about it, and writes:—

"These circumstances held me waking during almost all the night. Oh! for wisdom from above to direct me aright!"

A few days after leaving them, he received the united invitation of the church and congregation to the pastoral office, and his conclusions on the matter are thus recorded in his diary:—

"Friday, July 25 (1834).—After much prayer for guidance, much consideration, and many careful searchings into providential leadings and indications, I this day finished and despatched my reply to the church at South Molton, consenting to accept their call to the pastoral office, provided the terms of my reply should meet their approbation. May the issues and consequences prove, that I have been led to this conclusion by the infallible direction of my heavenly Father. 'Tis satisfactory to my own mind to know that all my dear friends, whom I have consulted, approve of this step, and that every providential interposition, as far as I am able to perceive, apparently points that way. For months I have desired and prayed, that the Lord would be pleased to find for me, some station of fixed and stated labour less laborious than the one I now occupy, and where my dear children, too, might find congenial employment. I have been moved to this by various considerations—principally because I have found my physical powers give way during the last two summers, with three out-door services on the Lord's Day, and the numerous other duties devolving upon me during the week; and because also, at my time of life, if a pastoral relation be desired, it is high time a change should be made, for in a little while I shall be an old man, and churches are not fond of inviting aged men, when there are so many young ones. . . . . I humbly hope and believe, holy Father, that the contemplated change is of Thee, and that it is because Thou hast work for me to do at South Molton, that Thou art directing my steps thither. I would, holy Father, be altogether Thine. Thee I would serve in the gospel of thy Son, and to that blessed service I would humbly consecrate the remainder of my days. Graciously accept through Christ Jesus these desires of my heart, and then send me *where* Thou wilt, and make me *what* Thou wilt. Amen."

A few more extracts from his journal will close what we may term the third portion of his ministerial career:—

"Friday, Aug. 1 (1834).—On this memorable day, slavery is abolished throughout the British dominions. Blessed be God for this! To commemorate this glorious event, religious services have been held in most of our places of worship. I attended the one held in Islington Chapel, and hope I was enabled to rejoice in my spirit before the Lord.

"Lord's Day, Aug. 3.—Preached at seven in Farringdon Street; at three, and half-past six, in White Conduit Fields. Large congregations on each occasion, and much liberty in preaching, especially in the evening. But my poor feeble nature was exhausted with the exertion, and yet how to spare myself I know not. The subject was deeply important, the multitude large, and all solemnly attentive. May spiritual good be the result!

"Wednesday, Aug. 6.—Called on Mr. B., and had a free conversation about dissolving my connection with the Christian Instruction Society, and removing to South Molton. He sympathized with my views, and justified the steps I had taken. He thought it honourable in me to purpose staying till October, as the Society would then reap the benefit of my labours in out-door preaching, to the end of the season. This is satisfactory, and another reason for gratitude.

"Tuesday, Aug. 12.—Went to the Board meeting, and thence to Shadwell, where I preached in the open air, before Mr. C. Hyatt's chapel, to a large assembly of sailors and others. It was good to be there. All heard with deep and fixed attention, and many a hardy tar showed the interest he took in the service, by his smiles and tears. At the close, an old sailor shook me by the hand, and said he remembered to have heard me many times at Bristol, both in the Pithay Chapel, and in the open air. Oh, that some of these may be as brands plucked from the fire!"

The close of the month finds him in Manchester, and is thus noticed:—

"Lord's Day, Aug. 31.—Once more amongst my old friends at Canal Street, standing on the hallowed spot where I have often unfurled the gospel banner, and cried, 'Behold the Lamb,' etc. Morning and evening preached for the Sabbath school, and in the afternoon addressed the scholars and teachers. The congregation in each case numerous, and many, very many of my former flock full of kindness and affection. May the best of heaven's communications be their portion!

"Lord's Day, Sept. 7.—Supplied this morning and evening for Mr. C. at Salford, and in the afternoon gave an address at Canal Street, on the death of Anne Botham, one of my former scholars, who was present last Sabbath, and with whom I spoke after the service, but who on Tuesday was taken off by cholera. May the Word prove a blessing!

"Lord's Day, October 5.—Went to Claremont with my dear girls, heard Mr. Blackburn, and at the ordinance officiated for Mr. B., the senior deacon, who is away. Took leave of Mr. B. and several valued friends. Preached at three in the Tent in White Conduit Fields, and at half-past six in the little chapel, Blue Anchor Alley, Bunhill Row; and thus closed my labours in connection with the Christian Instruction Society. May all the sins connected with my poor services be pardoned. May some spiritual good result, and in all may God be glorified!"

The following Saturday he left London for Bristol, spending a few days in his native city on his way to the West. The following characteristic entry in his journal will close the present chapter:—

"Lord's Day, Oct. 12.—A silent Sabbath. I needed rest; yet I do not like to spend Sabbaths thus. There's much to be done in this wicked world, and I like to be always attempting to accomplish a little. In the forenoon heard Mr. M'Donald, a Wesleyan; evening, Mr. Legge, at Bridge Street," etc., etc.

After spending a few days pleasantly amongst relations and friends, he reached South Molton in safety, October 17th, 1834.

CHAPTER VI.

PASTORAL LIFE AT SOUTH MOLTON AND CORK.

"A genuine priest,
The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king
Is styled, when most affectionately praised,
The father of his people. Such was he;
And rich and poor, and young and old, rejoice
Under his spiritual sway."

WORDSWORTH.

SECTION I.

SOUTH MOLTON, the sphere of Mr. Pyer's labours for the next three years, was a perfect contrast to any he had hitherto occupied. It is a small inland town in the north of Devon, about twelve miles from Barnstaple, containing about 4000 inhabitants, and possessing little outwardly attractive. Two or three cattle fairs, held annually, and the running of the mail and stage-coaches through the town daily, being, at the time of which we speak, almost everything of a stirring or public character about the place, if we except the occasional bustle of an election—South Molton being one of the polling towns for the northern division of the county. Yet to this quiet retreat, he was, doubtless, directed by an unerring hand; and here he was to be prepared, in many ways, for still further service in his church. Small and apparently insignificant as the town may appear, we cannot forbear remarking, that it has been honoured by God to send forth several ministers and missionaries, of whom Mr. Buzzacott, so long an eminent labourer in the South Seas, is one who deserves special mention. But there are many more, some of whose names have escaped our recollection; but whose faithful service in the Lord's vineyard bears record on high.

In addition to the honour thus conferred upon this little town, of sending forth so many preachers of the gospel, South Molton could boast of possessing one of the oldest Dissenting churches in the kingdom; but the ancient edifice, of more than a hundred years standing, had been pulled down, and a new one nearly completed on its site, at the time of Mr. Pyer's introduction to their notice. His probationary services were held in the Market House, during the three or four Sabbaths he supplied them. With the opening of their new sanctuary, his pastorate amongst them commenced, and is thus memorialized:—

"Wednesday, October 22, 1834.—This day we dedicated our newly-erected building, to the worship and service of the Triune Jehovah; and in the evening my connection with the church and congregation was solemnly recognized. In the morning, Brother Davies, of Torrington, began with reading the Scriptures and prayer; Brother Smith preached from 2 Cor. iii. 7—9; Brother Thomas (Baptist), of Bampton, concluded. In the afternoon, Brother

Edwards, of Bideford, commenced, and Mr. Smith again preached from John i. 29. Brother Lane, the Baptist minister from this town, closed the service, At night Brother Sharp prayed, Brother Heuderbourck, of Tiverton, delivered the introductory discourse, received from Mr. Thorn, sen., an account of the steps taken by the church to induce my settlement among them, and then called upon the church to confirm their choice. He then asked, and I replied, to the usual questions. Brother Poole, of Bow, offered the dedication prayer; Brother Kent, of Barnstaple, addressed me; and Brother Smith preached to the people. This was a long service, but, on the whole, interesting."

The ordinary routine of a country pastor's life does not present many striking incidents; yet we shall possibly cull some stray thoughts and passages from his diary, that will evidence how diligently he yet served his Lord and Master; and we know full well that from that comparatively obscure corner of the earth, many shall arise in the last great day to thank God for his ministrations. Memories, too, of a yet more sacred and mournful order, link that isolated town to the story of his life; for there, within the precincts of the hallowed house, wherein his voice has so often and so faithfully proclaimed the gospel message, lie the mouldering remains of his beloved daughter Elizabeth. But we anticipate. His active spirit soon found work for itself, even in the seclusion of a country town, while he carefully redeemed the comparative leisure he now enjoyed, for the purpose of intellectual advancement, and an increase of his stores of knowledge. He was not long installed as pastor, before he had established a cottage prayer-meeting, two Bible classes, and two or three village preaching stations, in addition to his ordinary pulpit engagements at home; consisting at that time of three services on the Lord's Day, and two in the week; but as the Sabbath school rapidly increased, the afternoon service was given up in its favour. His broad, philanthropic views, and intense love of freedom, led him also to take more than a common interest in civic and political affairs; so that he was quickly identified with every movement around him, bearing upon the temporal or spiritual welfare of his fellow-townsmen. We give a few extracts illustrative of his course as a settled pastor:—

"Lord's Day, December 20 (1834).—One of the best Sabbaths I ever spent. To preach the Word was a gracious, happy employment, and to witness the interest manifested by the people was refreshing to my spirit. In the morning I endeavoured to lead the hesitating to decision; in the afternoon I sought to show the way to the throne of grace; and at night addressed the aged. All listened with deep attention. May the effectual blessing be poured out!

"Lord's Day, May 17 (1835).—Preached this morning on the blessed doctrine of justification by faith. My heart and tongue were both at liberty, and the Word appeared to be drunk in by all the congregation. In the afternoon I invited the people to 'come and reason with the Lord,' and in the evening declared 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved.' A blessed Sabbath.

"Thursday, May 21.—God appears to be working in the minds of some under my unworthy ministry. . . . . Oh! to be the means of converting sinners to God! What an employment!—too much for an angel; and yet here am I, a poor, polluted sinner, employed in it."

In the following month (June, 1835) he supplied a pulpit at Devonport for a few weeks, and enjoyed some pleasant social intercourse with his Plymouth friends; little imagining that in the course of a few years more he should be removed, in God's providence, to the very spot, and after twenty years of active, zealous labour, should there peacefully depart to his everlasting reward. At the close of the month he returned to his quiet home, and was soon after cheered by an affectionate letter from his daughter E., whom he had left behind on a visit to his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Smith. From this letter we make the following extract, as it shows the interest felt in his ministry, at this early stage of their acquaintance, by a people with whom the last years of his life were passed:—

"Last Thursday morning I walked to Mr. P.'s, accompanied by Mr. G., who was kind enough to be my guide, as I could not find my way alone. I spent the day with Mrs. P. and Mrs. T.; they were both delighted to see me. It appears, from Mrs. T.'s account, that your services were very acceptable at Mount Street, so much so, that she is almost frightened lest the people should entice you from

South Molton. I told her, however, there was no fear of that; but you know she is very tenacious of your popularity away from home. Nevertheless, she says, 'it does her heart good to hear the people praise you.'"

We cannot withhold the following interesting reference to the beloved martyr-missionary, John Williams:—

"Saturday, Sept. 12 (1835).—Have spent a delightful week, and had most interesting missionary meetings. That revered man of God, the Rev. John Williams, and the Rev. S. S. Wilson, from Greece, have been with us, and unusual interest has been excited. I count it no small honour to have under my humble roof, the apostle of the South Sea Islands, and to have been favoured with unrestrained intercourse with one so eminently honoured of the Lord. He also appears to have felt greatly interested in South Molton, forasmuch as some of his most devoted coadjutors in the islands of the Pacific, went forth from this little church, and others are preparing to go. He was very attentive to the relatives of the excellent Mr. Buzzacott, and told them many things of their worthy relative, which they were delighted to hear. He was also much pleased with the resolutions I had prepared for our meeting, and begged copies of them, saying, he thought they were the best he had ever met with. His sermon at Barnstaple was of the most touching description, in which he gave us a brief outline of the providential and gracious arrangements by which he was brought to God, and led to devote himself to missionary work. His speeches, both there and here, were full of everything excellent; and the habit, temper, conduct of the good man, are all so simple, so natural, and so full of piety, that you cannot help loving him. The brethren, D. and E., with myself, were filled with delight in his company. . . . . We have accomplished one good thing—the formation of a Society here. I was greatly opposed in attempting it; but the thing is done, and I am thankful. Hitherto they have only had a sermon once a year, and a collection afterwards, amounting to four or five pounds; now our collectors will work all through the year, and I am persuaded we shall raise something handsome. Father, accept it.

"Lord's Day, October 4.—Commemorated to-day the third centenary of the printing of the English Bible, by preaching two sermons on the subject, and had much comfort and enlargement in each of the services. My dear people listened with great attention and earnest interest; and we all rejoiced before God for the precious boon conferred, and the glorious privileges and advantages resulting from the possession and circulation of the Word of God. At the Lord's Table, in the afternoon, I dwelt upon the same topic, in connection with the immediate object of our gathering around the sacred board, and there also we rejoiced before the Lord, and gave glory to his holy name.

"Thursday, December 3.—My birthday. Five-and-forty years I have been in the wilderness. Alas! what a cumberer of the ground! How multiplied my mercies, and how manifold my sins! And yet the Lord beareth with me, and continues his loving-kindness day by day. Oh! that my heart may be made to bow down before Him, and yield itself wholly to his control!

"Thursday, Dec. 31.—The year closes, and, with its retiring hours, demands at least a retrospective glance. During its revolve, my heavenly Father has showered upon my path ten thousand mercies, not one of which have I deserved; and for all I would freely present my unfeigned thanksgivings. Among them, the comfort I have had in preaching the Word generally, and the overwhelming manifestations of the Divine goodness at some seasons, deserve to be first recorded. . . . . In my study, too, while searching the Scriptures and preparing for pulpit exercises, I hope I have been graciously aided from on high, and enabled in some good degree to comprehend that truth, which I have endeavoured to exhibit to the congregation. Here, too, I have not been without some sweet seasons of communion with God, and happy foretastes of the joys of paradise. My family mercies have been multiplied, our health continued, and our comforts increased. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.' But, alas! in the midst of all my mercies, how great has been my unfaithfulness, and how manifold my sins!' 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit,' and at times has gained the ascendancy. The continued affliction of my poor desolate wife is yet a source of perpetual uneasiness, and my rebellious heart is far from being still before God. . . . .

"Lord's Day, Jan. 10 (1836).—A day of comfort and interest. In the afternoon examined the children on part of the third chapter of John, and in the evening on the first of Genesis. The answers were given with great readiness and correctness, and seemed to interest the congregation as much as the children. The singing was excellent. At the close of the afternoon's examination, I gave an address to the children, and in the evening to the parents. All seem to be delighted with the services of the day, and my heart rejoices before the Lord. Thus I have fresh encouragements to devote myself more heartily and entirely to the blessed work in which I am engaged.

"Lord's Day, Jan. 17.—A good season in preaching this morning; in the afternoon expounded, and in the evening commenced a series of lectures, of which I have printed and circulated a prospectus. The chapel was well filled, many strangers being present; and all listened with deep attention to the close, though the service was prolonged considerably beyond the usual time. I had prepared the lecture with some care, and felt more at ease in its delivery than I had anticipated. The Lord send down his blessing, and grant that conviction of the truth may be fastened on many hearts.

"Lord's Day, Feb. 7.—The way of access to God, by the mediation of Jesus, was the subject this forenoon; and, blessed be God, the truth shone gloriously. My dear people appeared to enter into, and feel the subject. Thus we were prepared to surround the Lord's Table in the afternoon, when the blessing from above seemed to descend copiously and rest upon us. These sacramental occasions are indeed times of refreshing, from the presence of the Lord. He is in the midst of us, and gives us to feel and know that it is no vain thing to worship God, through the one glorious sacrifice of our divine and redeeming Saviour. Would that my heart were wholly and for ever yielded up to Him! Oh, to be baptized with his Spirit and filled with his love! In the evening, delivered my fourth lecture on 'The guilt and danger of denying Christ.' Still well attended. Many Church people come, and I learn that in the town generally, these lectures are frequently topics of conversation, and of some wonder. Oh, that they may be of use! May I be kept, amid all that I hear, from pride. Let not vanity mar my service, and provoke Thee, O Lord, to withdraw thy gracious favour. Humble my spirit, wash my heart, and enable me to pursue and possess a single eye to thy glory. Thus kept, all will be well."

Thus energetically and usefully his days glided on. Many additions were made to the church, especially from amongst the young; on one occasion *eight* were admitted together. The particulars of this very pleasing circumstance, are thus referred to in a letter to his daughter E., dated June 26th, 1836:—

"I have spent a laborious, but happy Sabbath. Much comfort in preaching, and increased congregations. I hope, too, some good is doing. I have had eight young people to converse with me, previous to being proposed for membership, three of whom were impressed under one sermon in September last, from 'The harvest is past,' etc., and three others in November, while hearing me from 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.' Another was wrought upon, by another discourse soon after I came here; text, 'And I, if I be lifted up,' etc.; and the other, not by any single discourse, but by several. These are tokens of good. Help me, by your prayers, to be thankful, and to expect even greater things than these."

But as the year drew near its close, a deep, dark shadow fell upon his manly heart, and the raven-wing of death hovered around his habitation. The beloved daughter to whom the above letter was written—the loved and admired of a large circle of friends in Plymouth, where she had been for a short time located as assistant in a ladies' school—returned home in declining health. It was soon but too evident to the distressed family circle, that her days on earth were numbered. Lovely in person, amiable in temper, and of an exceedingly lively and buoyant spirit, but, above all, a true Christian, it was a bitter, bitter trial to contemplate the surrender, and to acquiesce in a will higher and wiser than their own. She returned home at the end of August, and communed with the church, for the last time, the first Sabbath in September; after which she gradually "faded away," and on the 26th of January, 1837, peacefully departed in the faith and hope of the gospel, aged twenty years and six months. During the last two months of her life, her father was accustomed to read and pray with her daily, as her weakness prevented her joining the family circle sufficiently early for morning worship. His evenings, too, which were not occupied by pastoral duties, were almost exclusively devoted to her; the reading of several instructive biographies, and other suitable books, forming an agreeable method of cheering her lonely hours of solitude and weakness. And when the blow came at last, keenly felt as it undoubtedly was, the faith and fortitude of the Christian did not forsake him. He was enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." On the Sabbath morning, when her coffined remains lay in calm repose, in the room she had so lately occupied, he ascended his pulpit, and proclaimed, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory;" but it was almost too much for even so strong-minded a man as he. The whole congregation was in tears, and for some minutes he was compelled to give way himself, to the struggling emotions of his lacerated heart. A month later, when summoned to Plymouth to attend the funeral of a friend, he writes:—

"Yesterday morning we all went to Norley to hear Mr. B., of Carrickfergus, for the Irish Evangelical Society. In the evening I read and prayed, and Mr. D. preached. Just as I stood up to read, my eye involuntarily turned to the spot where dear Lissie used to sit, and met the eye of Mrs. C., who was then occupying the seat. This almost upset me. However, I endeavoured to get through as well as I could; but throughout the remainder of the service, and after we came home, I was much distressed. I have gone nowhere but to Mrs. S.'s since I have been here, for I cannot sufficiently command my feelings to see dear E.'s former friends. Many came to me yesterday at the chapel, for the dear child was a universal favourite here." *

SECTION II.

It was during his dear child's illness that an invitation first reached him to visit Cork. Dr. Payne, then President of the Western College, had been supplying the pulpit formerly occupied by the Rev. John Burnett, and had been requested to look out for them a minister likely to prove suitable and acceptable. Knowing Mr. Pyer's abilities, he named him to them; and soon after, a letter from the senior deacon invited him over. This invitation, owing to his daughter's precarious health, he was obliged to decline; but shortly after her decease, a second invitation came, accompanied by warm expressions of sympathy in his trial, and kindly urging that a change of scene might, under the circumstances, be desirable. To this Mr. Pyer yielded, and paid his first visit to Cork in May, 1837. From letters written at this period we make a few extracts. His first letter is mainly descriptive of his journey to

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* A brief memoir, together with her funeral sermon, preached both at South Molton and Plymouth, by the Rev. G. Smith, was published, but has been long out of print.

Bristol, and of his voyage thence to Cork, and concludes thus:—

"I thank God I am in excellent health. The voyage, I hope, has done me good. I enjoyed it very much; had no sickness. Indeed, I did not see a single gentleman sick, and I only heard that some of the ladies were so. I often wished you had been with me, and should be glad if you were here. The entrance to Cork harbour, is one of the most splendid scenes I ever beheld. I was much reminded of Plymouth and its neighbourhood, everything is so similar."

"DOUGLAS, NEAR CORK, *May* 9, 1837.

"MY DEAR KATE,— . . . . Since I have been here the weather has been delightfully fine, and nature has begun to put on her gayest attire. The country around is of the most beautiful description, and from Mr. Logan's house the views are almost as picturesque as could be desired. The scenery is diversified by hill and dale, studded with villas, and adorned with foliage of all descriptions. Immediately around the house, there are shrubberies, flower and kitchen-gardens, and several acres of beautiful meadows. In these I often stroll alone, and am much refreshed physically and mentally, and, I hope I may add, spiritually too. . . . . The whole family do everything to make me comfortable. This kindness I endeavour to reciprocate, and flatter myself that I have succeeded, for I seem to be already a bit of a favourite with all. They tell me that I am more like an Irishman than an Englishman, having, as they say, little of the stiffness and formality of the latter, and much of the openness and freedom of the former. I tell you these things, that you may be assured of my personal comfort. Do not, however, imagine that, in the midst of these present enjoyments, I forget you and my little cottage at South Molton. You are present to my thoughts daily, and are constantly remembered in my applications to a throne of grace. . . . . I think I told you that the chapel was a spacious, handsome building, in the very heart of the city. When Mr. Burnett was here, it was well filled; but since his removal, having had no minister settled for any length of time, and many of their supplies being unsuitable, the congregation dwindled, and is now a mere skeleton. . . . . I did not enjoy the Sabbath much. The place and people were altogether strange; there was nothing to arouse and excite the feelings; and hence, both in prayer and preaching, I seemed to labour," etc.

"CORK, *May* 16, 1837.

"Yesterday I had a delightful excursion on horseback, up the valley of the Cork river to Inniscarra, thence to Blarney, and then back to Cork. I left between eleven and twelve, and returned by half-past five to dinner. Blarney is a beautiful spot, and was once a place of much importance. It contains the ruins of a castle in the midst of a lovely demesne, with lake, shrubberies, several hundred acres of meadow-land, etc., in the midst of hills. I often thought of you coming and going, and should have been delighted to have you with me to share my pleasures. . . . . I think I told you that the first Sabbath I was here the congregations were very small. After that was passed, it was prophesied on all hands that it would be different the next Lord's Day. In the Friday's newspaper a paragraph appeared, announcing that the Independent congregation at George Street, had secured the efficient services, etc., and then something was said about eloquence, ability, and all that sort of thing; and consequently on Sabbath Day the congregations were much increased. Whether these were drawn by the puffing paragraph, or the actual attractions of the preacher, I know not. However, I spent a pleasanter Sabbath as the consequence, and endeavoured to set before them the truth as it is in Jesus. I had a measure of comfort and liberty in so doing, though not all that freedom I realize in my own pulpit. But the people seem to be hugely pleased, and talk of still larger numbers next Sabbath. Of course I shall be happy to perceive an increased attendance; but much more if saints are edified and sinners converted."

"*May* 23.

". . . . Mr. M., one of the deacons, has an extensive business concern in Cork, and lives at Blackrock, three miles distant, in a splendid mansion, surrounded by twenty acres of most beautiful meadow-land, abutting upon the harbour, which here spreads out into a vast expanse of water, resembling a splendid lake, the borders of which are covered with villas, mansions, pleasure-grounds, and trees of the most luxuriant foliage. I dined there on Wednesday last, and met a large party, chiefly members of the church and congregation at George Street. These, together with Mr. and Mrs. M., their ten children, and Miss H., their niece, filled the spacious dining-room, and reminded me of some of our large dinner-parties at Manchester. After dinner we walked through the grounds and gardens, where I saw much to admire. Tea was served up in the drawing-room, and on its removal we sung a hymn. I then delivered an exposition of the 27th Psalm, and prayed; after which we enjoyed a delightful conversation of an entirely religious nature. Conversation was well kept up by Mr. L., Mr. James, and Joseph M'Mullen, and some of the ladies, during which all the rest gave undivided attention, and I acted as a sort of president. All this was done without the least formality, in the most easy and unaffected manner. Between ten and eleven, Mr. L. and I returned home in his open car, on a beautiful moonlight evening, which harmonized with the state of feeling into which we were brought, by thus spending our time in a truly rational and Christian manner."

"CORK, *June* 7, 1837.

". . . . I daily feel the great chasm made in our domestic circle, and yet I hope I also indulge a disposition to be resigned, and patiently to wait all the will of our heavenly Father. Through the whole of my earthly pilgrimage, He has been so infinitely gracious to me and mine, that I cannot doubt his goodness, nor question for a moment his love and care of me to the end of my days. I have been led this morning by circumstances to review much of the past, and to trace his compassionate care; and I trust the sentiments awakened in my mind, have been those of devout thanksgiving for the past, and holy trust in regard to the future. It is sweet to lie passive in his hands, and to resign all we have to his control. Could I hear a voice telling me every hour what He would have me do, I think I should make the attempt to render a willing obedience. Let God be honoured and glorified in us and by us, and then all will be well."

"CORK, *June* 16, 1837.

"MY DEAR KATE,—. . . . I can truly say that in all my enjoyments here, one deficiency has been ever uppermost in my mind—the absence of my much-loved child; and could I have had your society, all my pleasures in this land would have been doubled. . . . . Sabbath was a highly interesting day. In the morning the chapel was nearly full, forming a delightful contrast to the 150 I had the first Lord's Day I was here. At night, with the exception of a small space at the extreme end, and around the pulpit, every seat was occupied. On this occasion I fulfilled the request of the people, by preaching a sermon on the death of Dr. Quarry, a highly respectable clergyman, who for thirty-five years ministered the Word in this city, and who was the spiritual father of many in the George

Street church. Of course, there were many Church folks there; and had you seen the cars and carriages which gathered round the chapel at the close of the service, you might have imagined your father in some danger of becoming proud. I am not sure that I had not some feeling of the sort, though I endeavoured to pray against it; and in the pulpit I delivered, I believe, in plain terms, the faithful gospel message. Oh! that the Word may be rendered effectual, and may God the Holy Ghost seal the truth upon many hearts! This, after all, is the thing I desire; and to see sinners brought to repentance is what, as a minister, I would covet above all other things in the world. . . . . "

We may supplement these epistolary fragments with some brief jottings from his note-book:—

"Saturday, May 20.—At Douglas, preparing for to-morrow's labours. Humbled, ashamed, desirous of attaining true and constant spirituality. What reason for reproof—what room for improvement!

"Lord's Day, May 7.—Went to the city in the pony-car; preached at twelve; the ordinance afterwards. Returned and addressed the children and adults on Mrs. L.'s premises. Dined, and rode to the city, and preached at half-past six. Enjoyed the evening service tolerably. Morning congregations select, but miserably small; all appeared dull, inanimate, comparatively uninteresting. Is this the warm-hearted, lively, enthusiastic people of whom I have heard so much? I must not judge hastily;

but it appears to me, that with all their excellences, there is little of that warm, deep, heartfelt piety which is found in most English congregations. Is their religion speculative? I must look, examine, inquire. A little mortified; missed the freedom I generally enjoy at home. Everything strange, and the smallness of the congregation compared with the spacious, handsome chapel, had a most chilling effect. Perhaps it will be better by and by. Oh! for a copious effusion of the Spirit. Without this, my visit to the Emerald Isle will be vain and profitless. I cannot claim the attention, and carry it along, by intellectual displays. Burnett did this, and perhaps spoiled the people for the humble and plain exhibitions of the gospel, as put forth by men of ordinary powers. Something is wrong, or why this deadness? Lord, make me an instrument of good—of conversions, if it please Thee."

Such were his early impressions and comments on first visiting this land of strangers. His visit was extended to seven weeks, and each succeeding Sabbath witnessed an increase in the congregation. On Tuesday evening, June 6, after the usual lecture, a church-meeting was called; and on the return home of his worthy host and hostess, he says:—

"Mr. L. informed me that the church, by a unanimous determination, had appointed a large deputation to meet me in the library on Thursday next, to present their request that I should consent to come among them as their pastor!! I am surprised at this. I had reason to know that my labours, at least some portion of them, were acceptable to some; but I had concluded that they were coldly received for the most part, and no idea of any general impression in my favour. True, the congregations have rapidly increased; but this was not much to be wondered at, for novelty has charms everywhere. Mr. L. tells me, he never witnessed greater cordiality and unanimity, and that the impression is not confined to the church and congregation, but that the feeling in the town generally, among the Protestant part of the population, is universally expressed in favour of my coming to Cork. I feel quite upset by this movement, and am full of perplexity. I told Mr. L., in reply, that I was comfortably settled, and that were I in a different position, it would be a serious question with me whether I ought not to come to Cork."

This conversation occasioned Mr. Pyer considerable anxiety, sleepless nights, and much earnest prayer for direction. The deputation was met, and the feeling was so strong in his favour, that all the male members of the church had requested to appear in person. Numerous considerations were urged, such as the following:—"Their necessitous condition; the ease of an English congregation in obtaining a minister, and *their* difficulty; the trials they had undergone; the firmness of principle they had evidenced; the importance of Cork as a station for usefulness in regard to the cause of Christ generally, and our denomination particularly; the present favourable circumstances of the Protestant population of the city; the peace they enjoyed as a church; the entire unanimity of all the members of the church and congregation, of all the young people in the several families, of many of other denominations; the public feeling in his favour," etc. In reply, Mr. Pyer promised to "take the matter into serious consideration, and let them know whether he would receive an invitation or not," and during the remainder of his stay amongst them, seems to have been unusually perplexed about the matter. One day he writes :—

"I have thought and thought again and again, and nothing as yet appears to assume a definite shape in all my musings. I endeavour to look above, and trust I shall be directed aright."

Again :—

"June 10.—Was kept awake most of the night with the perplexity occasioned by the movement here. The people seem to have set their hearts upon obtaining my services, and I know not what to do. It would be folly to come to a conclusion while here. I have therefore determined to pray for guidance; to inform myself of all the features of the case, as far as my opportunities will allow; to consult my brethren in England, especially those who are acquainted with Cork, and to give no reply to the church, till I shall have had time to deliberate on the whole quietly at home, and apart from the influences which now surround me.

"Lord's Day, June 11.—Slept rather better last night, and rose considerably refreshed; was cheered with the sight of a numerous congregation; had comfort and great collectedness in prayer, and considerable freedom and, I hope, some power in preaching. In the evening sought to improve the death of Dr. Quarry, etc. Several present, who have not attended since Burnett left, and some who were never seen there before. The people are full of spirits, and seem to calculate that all these things will make an impression on me, and that they have only to secure me, and then they shall have a large congregation, and everything else, which, as a religious society, they can desire. But I do not feel so sanguine; still, for the circumstances of this day, especially when compared with my first Sabbath here, I ought to be thankful: then 150 people or less, now the chapel full; then dead, cold, comfortless, to-day happy in my work, feeling as though the Word told upon the hearers, and was received. For these mercies the Lord make me grateful!"

Tuesday, June 18, closed this, his first visit to this interesting people, who, at the close of the evening service, "pressed around to say kind things, and expressed their earnest wishes that he might ultimately come amongst them."

The matter thus pressed upon Mr. Pyer's attention, was not decided till he had received counsel from several ministerial brethren, and had spent another month (October) amongst the people so anxious to obtain his pastoral oversight. On this second visit, his daughter accompanied him, she having entertained a strong prejudice against Ireland, and being much averse to a settlement there. The extreme kindness and hospitality of the people, soon removed everything prejudicial from her mind; and their evident anxiety to secure Mr. P.'s services, led her to sympathize in their wishes, and second their efforts. Thus the invitation was finally accepted, and his settlement at Cork took place in March, 1838.

SECTION III.

We have given the preliminary steps of this removal at some length, fearing lest Mr. Pyer's short residence in Ireland, should to some minds indicate an appearance of haste in its accomplishment. We trust the facts of the case will correct such an opinion. At no period of his history did he so patiently deliberate, and carefully weigh all contingencies, nor more earnestly seek Divine aid and guidance. Yet he was scarcely settled twelve months in this new and important sphere, before elements of dissatisfaction appeared; and, in quarters least expected, a manifest decline in cordiality took place. This was perceived with much sorrow by the church generally, who, with faithful and strong affection, clung to their chosen pastor; and when fears were entertained that it might lead to a separation, overtures were made to him by these steadfast friends to establish a new interest. But he judiciously discountenanced such a division of a small and feeble church, in the midst of a Catholic population, feeling that he would rather retire quietly from the scene altogether. The death, too, of one of his firmest friends, and a deacon of the church, seemed further to loosen his hold of the place, and incline him to a return to England. But short as his pastorate was in Cork, it was not without tokens of the Divine favour and blessing. Many were added to the church, especially from among the families of the faithful; and to this day, his memory is cherished with affection and gratitude by many survivors, who received spiritual benefit and profit from his ministry. Others, we doubt not, have rejoined (some very recently) his glorified spirit, in that world where imperfections and differences of opinion, do not disturb their social harmony, or their eternal bliss.

In the spring of 1839, the London Missionary Anniversary Services were held in Cork. The Revs. R. Knill and George Smith attended as a deputation. This gave Mr. Pyer an opportunity of conferring freely with his friend G. S. on the state of affairs at George Street, and soon after led to his being invited to Mount Street, Devonport, to supply the pulpit recently vacated by their pastor's removal to Yorkshire. As we had occasion to remark in the former chapter, Mr. Pyer's services had been exceedingly acceptable to the people on a previous occasion; so it was no matter of surprise, that his visit to them, under existing circumstances, should end in an invitation, and subsequent settlement amongst them in July, 1839.

In closing this chapter, we cannot forbear giving an interesting extract from a letter, referring to a visit paid about this time to his former beloved flock at South Molton. It bears date, Plymouth, March 27, 1839:—

"I went there" (South Molton) "on Tuesday, the 19th, and every moment of my short stay was amply occupied; and all regretted, and none more than myself, that my stay was of necessity so limited. Mr. P. and Mr. S. met me at Barnstaple. We arrived about half-past nine, and got refreshments in South Street, and then I went to the *Mansion House* and slept" (a playful allusion to his host's new office, the Corporation Act having just come into operation). "Next day was spent in calling on the people. I dined at the Mayor's, and in the evening preached for Mr. M. We commenced in the school-room, which quickly became so crowded, notwithstanding its increased size, that we adjourned to the chapel. The evening passed pleasantly at Mr. S.'s, where we were joined by several who had taken tea with us. Thursday forenoon and afternoon was consumed in visits. Dined at Mrs. P.'s with several. A public tea-meeting was held in the school-room, which was well filled. Many were in from Alsware. After going round the room, and shaking hands, and chatting with every one, I took a cup of tea, slipped into the chapel, and sat in your accustomed corner for a quarter of an hour, read the tablet, etc.; but I will not tell you what were my thoughts then. Dear Lissie was as fresh in my recollections as ever; I rejoiced in the assurance that the dust over which I then sat" (she was buried under the pew floor) "shall be gathered up, and brought forth glorious, and pure, and happy. 'These lively hopes we owe to Jesu's dying love.' After tea, Mr. M. addressed me in congratulatory strains, and welcomed me into their midst. To this address I replied. Other addresses followed, intermingled with singing and prayer; and we spent a happy, happy time, from five o'clock to half-past eight. All inquired for you, and none felt your absence more than I did. . . . . Cheer up, my dear child. In the good providence of our heavenly Father, we shall soon meet again, and, under the Divine blessing, I trust our intercourse will daily improve, and be sanctified to our mutual comfort and advantage, and to our gracious preparation for that blessed world, where we shall dwell for ever, without any sinful alloy, or any prospects of separation.

"We shall have much to talk of when we meet; till then, believe me to remain, in unalterable regard,

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

CHAPTER VII.

PASTORATE AT DEVONPORT.

"'Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands.

"They watch for souls, for which the Lord
Did heavenly bliss forego;
For souls which must for ever live
In raptures or in woe."

DODDRIDGE.

SECTION I.

MR. PYER's removal to Devonport gave promise of peace, unanimity, and comfort. He was not an entire stranger to the people, who had so cordially invited him to preside over them; and though neither numerous nor wealthy, yet the union and earnestness shown in their invitation, coupled with his own preference for England, led him to accede to their desire. But notwithstanding the bright and cheering prospect before him, unusually chequered became these last twenty years of his laborious and useful life. The interest with which he was now identified, had originated many years previous, in a division from the mother church (worshipping in Princes Street), which was founded at the time, or as the result of the renowned George Whitefield's labours. Mount Street Chapel was erected during the Peninsular War, when building materials and labour were at a high premium; so that, although twenty years had passed since its erection, a debt of £800 still remained. Moreover, the chapel was badly situated, in an obscure part of the town, one end of the street being blocked up by a cross lane, and preventing the thoroughfare. It was also leasehold property, subject to a heavy ground rent, and other expenses, which greatly crippled the resources of the church and congregation; and, in these respects, did not present a very promising field of labour. We name these particulars somewhat specifically, as they had much to do with a series of trials and difficulties which the course of events brought about, leading, however, to an unlooked for and satisfactory termination.

For the information of some of our readers, we may state that Devonport is a large seaport town, principally supported by Her Majesty's Dockyard. An engine factory at Keyham has been added within the last twelve or fourteen years, and these two establishments regularly employ from 5000 to 6000 men, who, with their families and dependents, form the bulk of the population. It is also a military depôt, possessing extensive barracks; and, from its close proximity to Stonehouse and Plymouth, with its own two suburbs, Morice Town and Stoke, forms a place of considerable importance.

Amid so vast a population, Mr. Pyer soon found ample scope for the exercise of his varied talents; partaking, as they did, more of the *practical* and *useful* than the more showy, popular, and ornamental. Here he won the respect and esteem of a large circle of friends, and possessed in a greater degree the confidence of the public, than perhaps any other individual occupying a like prominent position in the town. Of this there were numerous and convincing proofs at the time of his lamented death; and to this day his loss is frequently referred to, by those whose social and philanthropic efforts had so long been aided by his judicious counsel and energetic co-operation, as "one that will not be easily repaired." Schemes of benevolence—enterprises of social, political, or civic interest—ever found in him a warm advocate and ready supporter. To aid such efforts, his tongue, and pen, and, as far as practicable, his purse, were at all times a cheerful and willing tribute. His activity, perseverance, and zeal were indomitable; not often surpassed, and, we venture to think, seldom equalled. Confirmatory evidence of these assertions will be traceable in the progress of this chapter, though we are unable to supply, as heretofore, extended notices from his own recording pen. Probably the enlarged engagements of his ever-busy life, led him to reduce the labour of a daily chronicle to mere jottings, for such we find them to be during the last twenty-five years of his earthly sojourn. But so methodical was the order of his mind, that not a single day during that long period, is without a notification of some sort, as to its occupation or emotional character. His regular mode of keeping and balancing his accounts, may be educed as another instance of his systematic and businesslike habits. He has been heard to say, that for every penny, to the best of his knowledge, he ever possessed, he could give account. The deficiency in journals above referred to, will be supplied in some measure by extracts from letters, addressed mostly to his daughter, during temporary absences from home, and will furnish some interesting particulars on a variety of subjects.

The first we submit to attention, was written a little more than twelve months after his settlement in Devonport, during a visit to Manchester, on behalf of the chapel debt. It will evidence the affectionate esteem in which he was still held, after many years of separation; and, in its closing remarks, evinces the habitual tendency of his own sanctified desires. After detailing his Sabbath engagements in various pulpits in the town, he goes on to say—

"I engaged in these and other services the more readily, as they were calculated to aid the object I had in view in coming to Manchester. I have worked hard; and although I have not done what I could have wished, still I think I shall ultimately obtain a respectable sum. More, however, has been given to me on the ground of old acquaintance and friendship, than from any sympathy with a cause so distant as Devonport. . . . . Although in the midst of friends, who are every day pressing me to partake their hospitalities, so that, if I had time, I might spend a month or two very pleasantly, I have such a prevailing inclination to be at home, that I can find no time for anything but the daily prosecution of my object, that I may get through the sooner. Last night I spent a few hours with the Book Society. They anticipated their meeting a week, to suit my convenience, and insisted on my being once more with them. I went, and gathered up something for the cause; and from seven to half-past eleven, spent a very pleasant evening. . . . . You speak of being dull, and occasionally depressed, in my absence. This is a feeling you should not yield to. Your daily duties call for your vigorous exertions, and your Bible and the throne of grace are always at hand; and in these you may find rich consolation. Pray, watch, believe, love, and live to God, and all will be well. I trust, if we are spared to meet, we shall spend our winter evenings pleasantly and profitably. I am looking forward to them with much interest, and am longing to be occupied in these as my amusement, and in severer duties in my study and amongst my people. Remember me most affectionately to all you meet, who may inquire for me. It would seem, from what J. says, that the people are warm in their expressions of regard, and wish for my return. It is sometimes a good consequence, arising from a pastor's occasional absence, that his people learn to love him more, and that he learns more highly to esteem his pastoral and home duties. I trust this will be the case in the present instance. I see there are not many more years of active, laborious service before me, and I am anxious to live only for the good of mankind, especially for the welfare of the people entrusted to my pastoral oversight, and the advantage of my dear children. . . . . Heavy trials have been my lot; but I would not complain, for gracious consolations have been poured in, and God has been my perpetual helper. I feel myself utterly unworthy of his unmerited mercy. To Him, and to Him alone, be all the praise. . . . . The Lord bless you, my dear children.—I am, my dear K.,

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

From letters in November, 1842, while fulfilling a preaching engagement at Ramsgate, we select the following sentences :—

"Religion is a sublime, yet, after all, a very simple thing—I mean the religion of a fallen sinner. It is only a deep consciousness of personal demerit, and a continuous cleaving to the cross of Christ. Through grace that cross is ever present to the eye of faith, and by that cross the way to the throne of grace is ever open. To neglect that throne is to neglect our own happiness, and to come to it without a present feeling of dependence on the cross, is to court disappointment; it is also to question the goodness and the veracity of God. He is ever good—ever waiting to be gracious—whatever be the state of our mind; and all that He demands is, that we believe his Word, and rely on his immutable power and willingness to help, and bless, and save. Viewed thus, there is everything to encourage, and nothing to repel the sinner, from coming now and always to God. It is this coming to God—this constant willingness to approach Him—which goes far to keep us near to the Saviour, and to recover us, when at any time we have been overcome by the enemy of our peace."

With what may be considered the advanced sentiments of the age, Mr. Pyer had a thorough sympathy; hence he joined heart and soul in the agitation of the "Anti-Corn Law League," which about this time put forth its strength with redoubled energy and power. He became a most efficient secretary for the district; and the exciting meetings held in connection with its labours, in which he took so prominent a part, are remembered with enthusiastic admiration by many. By this reference it will be seen that he did not consider his office, as a minister of the gospel, exempted him from civic duties and responsibilities. On this matter he went further than many of his brethren in the ministry, and in some quarters, we know, was severely censured; but his inherent love for, and adherence to, broad and expansive principles, justified to his own conscience his line of procedure; and there were those elements in his nature, fostered in their growth, no doubt, by the persecutions he endured in his early religious career, which would not be silent amid the stirring activities, whether of political or religious life, around him.

In the Liberal interest of the borough he rendered efficient service, from his first entrance into Devonport to the day of his death, and gentlemen connected with him in this branch of polity, were amongst the most sincere mourners at his apparently premature removal from their midst. Upon one occasion, great was his grief and disappointment when, by the cast of a few votes, Sir John Romilly was thrown out. He was requested to draw up an address to him, expressive of the feelings of the electors, and their appreciation of his worth, notwithstanding his defeat; and he formed one of the deputation appointed to present it. This circumstance is thus noted in his memorandum book:—

"Friday, Nov. 19, 1852.—Met Sir John in his study; gave me the life of his father (inscribed, 'The Rev. John Pyer, from his sincere friend, John Romilly'); chat—to the library—presented address—received Sir John's answer. Dinner; H. Tufnell, C. Strutt, Mr. James, Q.C., Sir J. B. C., and Mr. W. met us and dined. Two toasts—had to reply to the last. Cordially congratulated afterwards by Sir John's family, in the library, while taking coffee, and by the deputation. Spent a most agreeable evening; great kindness and cordiality everywhere."

To this interesting little incident we cannot forbear an addenda, supplied by his own lips after his return home. It was good-humouredly noticed by Mr. Tufnell, next whom Mr. Pyer sat at dinner, that he responded to the toast in pure water. His principles were respected, and a conversation ensued upon the extension of total abstinence views; and the beneficial influence they had exerted on society at large, was freely and candidly acknowledged.

In the memorable Scottish movement, resulting in the establishment of the "Free Church," Mr.

Pyer took a deep interest. A deputation visited Devonport in January, 1844, when almost the whole burden of arrangements for their meetings, etc., devolved on him. He joyfully received one member of the deputation into his house during their stay, and felt honoured in having them all four, with several ministerial friends in the neighbourhood, to dine with him, on the day of holding their public meeting in the Devonport Town-hall. In the same year, he first preached at Hoxton Chapel, London, and became from that time one of their regular supplies, until the system was altered in favour of a permanent ministry.

The following letter was written during his first visit to this place, and contains interesting allusions to the events just particularized :—

"HOXTON, *March* 9, 1844.

"MY DEAR KATE,— . . . . The Sabbath Day's service passed better than I had anticipated, and the deacons and friends received and cheered me with great kindness and cordiality. . . . . I hope I felt gracious assistance in the services, and was happy in my work. Owing to a cold, my voice was rather thick and uncomfortable morning and afternoon, but better at night. Great solemnity prevailed, and the immense mass listened with breathless attention. My texts were Ephes. i. 3; Psa. lxxxvi. 45; and Luke vii. 22, 23; so that you will easily recognize the topics of discourse. Oh! that a blessing may follow, and good be done! Monday was a tremendously wet day. It rained incessantly all day long. I went to Freemasons' Tavern after breakfast to the meeting of the Scotch Free Church, and heard Dr. C., Messrs. Sherman, Hamilton, MacNaughten, and others. The meeting lasted till one o'clock. . . . . I dined in the city, came back to tea, and then attended the missionary prayer-meeting, and gave an address. A large attendance, from four hundred to five hundred, and a good meeting. . . . . Tuesday evening, attended a missionary meeting at Holywell Mount Chapel. The place was literally crammed—aisles, children's gallery, and every corner full. You may remember that I preached here last October twelvemonth, so I had to make a speech, which, I am thankful to say, was well received. After the service, a fine-looking, respectable young man came to the vestry and inquired for me. He said his name was S.; that he came from Dursley; that he remembered four-and-twenty years ago, when a lad, to have heard me preach there; and that he had reason to bless God he had ever seen my face. He is now a member at Holywell Mount. I walked back to Hoxton, humbled, abased; yet rejoicing in the goodness of God to one so feeble and so unworthy. This circumstance I hope to remember, to set against others of a discouraging cast and character. Wednesday I went to the West End, made several calls, and had a long chat with Mr. Tufnell (member for Devonport). To Norfolk Street, Strand, and dined at four o'clock with Messrs. Paulton, W. J. Fox, —— Collier, of Plymouth, and several other gentlemen, members of the League. Mr. Bright arrived from

Rochdale about half-past six, when we all found our way to Covent Garden. I sat next to the chairman, and opposite Mr. Bright and Mr. Leader. The theatre presented a dense mass of human countenances, and the meeting was enthusiastic. Mr. Collier's speech told well; but you will see the account of the meeting in the League paper. Thursday I was poorly with a cold in my head, which completely stupified me. I remained indoors, reading and musing. In the evening, instead of the weekly lecture at Hoxton, we had a meeting for the Scotch Free Church. I took the chair. The deputation consisted of Messrs. Wallace, Cowe, Main, and Bridges; a good attendance and good speeches, though I think the deputation hardly equalled the one we had at Devonport. I had to make two or three speeches, and the thing passed off well. The Scotchmen were hugely delighted. They pressed me very heartily, and I doubt not sincerely, to come to Scotland and visit them. . . . . Your wish about a meeting in Exeter Hall for the Free Church, you will see is anticipated. One is to be held on Monday evening. It is our prayer-meeting at Hoxton; but I shall get to it if I can. From what I can learn, the deputations have not made that impression in London, which they have done in the provinces. But Dr. Candlish, Dr. Mackillan, and others, are now come, and they are looking for more stirring meetings. The collections, I believe, have been good. . . . . Well now, you have a budget of news. Write me an equal amount in your next, and till then believe me to be as ever,

"YOUR VERY AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

In 1845, the Western College was removed from Exeter to Plymouth, and Mr. Pyer elected one of its secretaries. For the prosperity of this valuable institution he faithfully laboured. Several of its students became members of his church during their collegiate term, to all of whom he was ever the judicious counsellor and unwavering friend. He edited the posthumous works of their venerated and beloved tutor, the Rev. Dr. Payne, to which was prefixed a brief memoir of his compilation, published in 1849. At their own request, he took part in the ordination services of many of these young brethren, who had partially enjoyed his fellowship and pastoral care. The following names occur to our recollection:—Revs. Norman Glass, at his settlement in Cardiff; W. Lewis, at Weymouth; J. Price, Missionary to Africa; and the October before his death, the Rev. J. P. Allen, at Falmouth. The Rev. J. M. Charlton, M.A., President of the Western College, was associated with him on the last occasion, and their admirable addresses were published by request. One of his last engagements, only the morning before his departure, was attendance upon one of the College Committee Meetings, when particulars relating to the site and erection of the present handsome building were under discussion.

He attended the Autumnal Session of the Congregational Union in the year 1845, which was held in Manchester, and greatly enjoyed intercourse with his old friends, as well as the conference on various topics important to the denomination. The enthusiasm with which he entered into such services, will be gathered from letters during his visit:—

"MANCHESTER, *October* 21, 1845.

"MY DEAR KATE,—You must have patience for a long communication, until the bustle in which I am now engaged shall subside a little. It is now all turmoil and work; and what with that, and the mutual greetings and congratulations of old friends, every moment is occupied from morning till night. The meetings are glorious ones. Such crowds! such unanimity, zeal, power, love, harmony! Oh, it is delightful! About 500 ministers and delegates are here, and much business is being done. Manchester—old Manchester—is more dirty and smoky than ever; but there are some noble spirits here. I am nicely situated in the family where I lodge—very kind and willing to oblige. But you must wait for news. I scratch this in the midst of bustle and employment, and scarce know what I am writing. . . . . I must close. Love to all.—Accept this as a proof of the love of

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His next letter entered more fully into details, from which we make two or three extracts. It bears date October 21st.

"It was a glorious sight. A large platform, filled by 150 to 200 ministers, and a crowded chapel. Three papers were read, and two speeches followed each paper. Breathless interest pervaded the whole assembly. All seemed earnest, eager, attentive; and all appeared to be alive, as with one instinctive desire, to serve their generation and glorify God. . . . . Wednesday morning, met at the Roby School-rooms at half-past nine. The upper room full. Important papers were read, and discussions ensued, on 'Provident and Annuitant Societies for Aged and Infirm Ministers, Widows, and Orphans,' 'Benefit Societies for Sick and Aged Members of Churches and Congregations,' etc., etc. This animated meeting closed at half-past two o'clock. We then repaired to the Corn Exchange, which was tastefully laid out for dinner; 530 dined. Then came speeches from the Chairman, Drs. Halley, Raffles, Hamilton, Messrs. Binney, Fletcher, etc.; then tea and coffee, and the evening meeting at Grosvenor Street Chapel—a larger platform, and a chapel more densely crowded than the night before. Alderman Kershaw in the chair. A paper on 'British Missions' read by Dr. Matheson. Speeches by Dr. Morrison, Messrs. Ely, Sherman, James Parsons, Aveling, Dr. Halley, and Wells. Three gentlemen from London offered £100 each toward the £1800 deficient on British missions, and to make it into £800, provided Manchester would raise the other £1000. Mr. Kershaw gave £100; Mr. M.—who was a Sunday-school boy when we were in Manchester—another £100; Mr. Sidebottom £50, etc., etc.—the rest to be made up on Sabbath Day. . . . . . Thursday, at half-past nine, in the school-room again. Mr. Ely read a paper on 'The Best Mode of Augmenting Congregational Funds;' Dr. Redford one on 'Dissenting Literature;' Mr. Wells one on 'Periodical Literature.' Most animating discussions on these topics followed, resulting in the proposal of a penny magazine, and the appointment of Dr. C. as editor. At half-past two we broke up, and at three again dined in the Corn Exchange. Mr. R. Fletcher occupied the chair to-day, and the scene was more lively, and the speeches better, than the day before. Messrs. Wells, Ainslie, Poore, Dr. Hamilton, etc., were the speakers. . . . .Thence to Mosely Street meeting in support of the Congregational Union—Dr. Raffles in the chair. Speakers, Messrs. Burnett, Tidman, J. A. James, Blackburn, Haynes, and A. Reed. This was the best of the Public Meetings. Such a mass of sanctified intelligence! Such power of appeal, of illustration, of argument, must be personally witnessed to form any idea of it. All were forward in declaring, both publicly and privately, that these have been the best meetings the Union has ever held. At the close, the greater part shook hands with old friends, and said, 'Adieu;' but many lingered still in Manchester. I went home full of interesting musings, tired, exhausted; but too weary, or too lively, or both, to get sound and refreshing sleep. . . . .Lord's Day, awfully wet from morning till night. Preached for D. at Cannon Street, and was heard, welcomed, and cheered by many of the fruits of my former ministry, who express deep and bitter regret that I ever left Manchester, and earnest hopes that I would return. Messrs. Binney, Wells, Haynes, Marshall, and James remained to preach for British missions. Collections were made in nearly all the chapels. In the morning, at Grosvenor Street, £200 and upwards were gathered; Mosely Street, £350; the others I have not heard; but no doubt much more than the £1000 is secured. . . ."

The following year (Oct. 1846) the "Union" meetings were held in Plymouth, when Mr. Pyer, and his friend, the Rev. E. Jones—then settled at Norley Chapel—made the necessary arrangements for the reception of ministers and delegates, holding of meetings, etc. The series of services in connection with this event, were of the most delightful and hallowed character, awakening deep interest among the Christian public generally of the three towns. Dr. Vaughan's opening address, in which a touching and beautiful allusion was made to the departure of the "Pilgrim Fathers," from our port to the far-off land of their adoption, was especially interesting. And the sermon, from Rev. iv. 22, of the Rev. John Ely, who shortly after finished his earthly course, is described as "of a very masterly, powerful, and practical description."

It is affecting to notice, how many who took a prominent part in the proceedings of these meetings, have ceased from their labours, and entered into rest.

On his return from Manchester, in 1845, Mr. Pyer supplied the pulpit of his friend Mr. Bevis, of Ramsgate, for a couple of Sabbaths; and while there, had an opportunity of visiting Dover, an account of which we next present.

"RAMSGATE, *November* 1, 1845.

"MY DEAR KATE,—My last note told you of my engagements up to Monday night. Tuesday morning the sun shone brightly, the air was deliciously balmy, and so I was tempted to pop over to Dover.

I got there about twelve o'clock, and sallied forth to inspect the Castle. It happened to be the day for seeing all the underground fortifications; and having been furnished with an order, I was enabled to go through and inspect every part. It is a wonderful example of the art of man, but it breathes or frowns destruction everywhere, and is so allied to the cursed demon of war, that I had no very agreeable sensations while viewing it. Leaving the Castle, I walked to the pier and harbour, and then through the town in an opposite direction from the Castle, about two miles to the Shakespeare Cliff. From this lofty eminence, I gazed on the glorious ocean, the opposite coast of France, and on innumerable vessels of all sizes and descriptions just come out from the Downs, and standing down Channel to the westward. I saw also a train or two come out of the tunnel, under and through the cliff. . . . ."

During a visit to London in May, 1846, we have the following cheering circumstance related. He had been preaching at the Pavement Chapel, and says:—

"A young man, who had attracted my attention by his earnest heed to the Word while I was preaching, came into the vestry afterwards, and said, 'My name is ——, brother to Mr. ——, of Devonport. This night five weeks I heard you in your own place about "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," etc., that sermon I shall never forget. I never felt before as I did then. I am now living at Islington, and hearing you were going to preach, I determined to come and hear you, and also to make myself known, and to tell you this.' He seems a well-disposed young man, and I hope he will do well."

From a sentence penned in connection with his visit to Dover Castle, Mr. Pyer's antagonistic views of human warfare may be readily inferred; and however Utopian at the present, may appear to some minds the efforts of the "Peace Society," he was one who believed them based on New Testament teaching, and therefore he cordially embraced any and every opportunity of diffusing them. Hence he warmly welcomed the visit of Elihu Burritt to Devonport and Plymouth, subscribed himself a member of the League of Universal Brotherhood, and in the years 1848 and 1849 attended as a delegate, the Peace Congresses held in Paris and Brussels. Letters referring to these matters will, no doubt, interest our readers:

"On board the 'Giraffe' steamer, off Margate,
Tuesday, *Sept.* 19, 1848, two P.M.

"MY DEAR KATE,—I wrote a hurried note from London last night. . . . . I returned to the Hall of Commerce, where a conference was held, and arrangements determined upon, and several letters read from Members of Parliament who sympathize in our object. Hence we went to Blackwall by trains at different times, and all sat down to a sumptuous tea at ten o'clock. The large room was filled with a most respectable company, who did ample justice to the refreshments set before them. At eleven o'clock it was announced that the ladies would retire to their berths, and that there were forty-five others for gentlemen, and it was hoped that these would be occupied by the most aged of the party. The young men might accommodate themselves in the cabin as they could, or walk the deck. I sought a soft plank on the floor, but the hoofs of the trampers became so numerous, I was obliged to shift my pillow, *alias* carpet-bag, to the top of the table, and then I assayed in vain to catch a few winks; for the thumping of the walkers above, and the ding-dong of the talkers within, rendered it impossible to sleep. All, however, were merry as crickets and sober as judges. Much wit and wisdom, in happy combination, came forth in the course of the night. At two o'clock it was announced that a dense fog had arisen on the river, which made it unsafe, or rather impossible, to proceed. Consultations were held as to leaving the vessel, and proceeding by Dover and Calais, etc. At length we determined to wait. We did so, till seven o'clock, when breakfast was announced. The cabin was thrice filled and thrice emptied, the tables each time cleared; and at half-past eight the fog allowed us to proceed. Soon after, the sun conquered; and here we are spanking along in a fine vessel, with 140 delegates on board, all well; though some beginning to be a little poorly, others snoozing in various directions, others grouped on the deck, with Sturge in the chair, letting off their effervescence by spouting and shouting at the top of their voices, so that the gentleman now speaking rings my ears every half minute with a sound, and nothing more—for the sense I am not near enough to catch. Several ladies surround the group—some taking notes, and one taking a sketch of the whole scene. Vincent is just by me; he talks of going to Paris to see Lamartine and others, and wishes me to go. I have not yet decided; the expense will guide me; inclination is there already. We are to sleep at several hotels, and are divided into groups of ten or twelve. Messrs. James, Bryant, and Luscombe, the good quakers of Plymouth, asked me to join them and Mr. Peek, to which I have consented; so we are to be domiciled together. But I must finish. Letters are to be posted at Ostend, we hope, by seven o'clock this evening, and therefore I write this. . . . . I am quite well; and with love to A. B. and the rest, and all friends, am

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"HOTEL DE GRAND BRETAGNE,
"11 o'clock, Wednesday Night, *Sept.* 20, 1848.

"MY DEAR KATE,—I am just come to my bedroom, and pen this to let you know I am safe at Brussels. We reached the offing at Ostend about ten o'clock last night; but could not pass the bar and land till four o'clock this morning. I then dispatched the note I wrote on board the steamer, and, after getting some refreshment, we came by a special train, and arrived here about eleven o'clock. At one, we held our first meeting; our second, at seven this evening. I am just come from it, and have only had time to get a cup of coffee and come to bed; and rest I greatly need, not having had my clothes off for two nights, and no sleep save a few winks while lying on a hard board, and a few more in the railway carriage. . . . . I cannot enter into particulars; our reception here has been delightful, meetings delightful, a beautiful city, great hospitality, kindness, etc., etc. Kind love to all around you, and to all friends; but I can say no more, being almost asleep, than that I am

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"LONDON, *August* 30, 1849.

"MY DEAR KATE,—Incessant occupation has prevented my writing, but I managed to despatch two newspapers to you since my last note from Paris, and one to Mr. E., with accounts of the Sittings of Congress, which I hope came safe to hand. . . . . You have had general information in the papers; and for more particular descriptions you must have patience, as I cannot do justice to the scenes I have witnessed in these hasty lines. Suffice it to say, everything has been of the most gratifying description. The soirée given by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. de Jocqueville, was most brilliant. We numbered altogether about 1500 persons; all the rooms were thrown open, and were very splendidly lighted up. The principal reception room, in which Madame de J. received the visitors, was most gorgeous. This led to another, which opened into the gardens; these were brilliantly illuminated; and here, in another room, was stationed a full military band. All the Cabinet Ministers of France were there; all the foreign ambassadors, except our own (Lord Normanby), who was out of town; the Archbishop of Paris; and the Pope's Nuncio. Here I met, and chatted with, friends from various parts of the kingdom and the world, interchanging salutations, inquiries, etc., which it was impossible to do during the sittings of Congress. Sabbath-day, we had two excellent and full services; Rev. W. C. Pennington, a black minister from America; and Mr. Burnett, preached in the morning, and Mr. Brock in the evening. The Quakers also had a service in a large room adjoining the Hall St. Cecile, to which I went at the close of the other—they not beginning till eleven o'clock, while ours began at ten. All the palaces and public buildings were thrown open to us, by order of the Government, free of charge. I have been over the Tuilleries, Luxembourg, Louvre, Pantheon; Nôtre Dame, Madeline, St. Roche Churches; Père le Chaise, etc., etc. Monday was devoted to Versailles and St. Cloud. This was a splendid day. The galleries of paintings, theatre, parks, gardens, waterworks, and illuminations employed eight or nine hours, every moment of which was walk, walk, walk, amidst scenes of surpassing interest and gorgeous beauty. But I cannot describe these things here; you must have patience. The The kindness of the French Government will appear when I tell you that the waterworks at Versailles only play four times in the year, and then at an expense of £800 each time. The circumstance of this being ordered to play for our special gratification, has been talked of all over Paris, and the two lines of railway were crowded all day long. . . . . It is computed that from 20,000 to 30,000 were found in the Park on Monday. But enough of Paris for the present." . . . .

Apart from the business transactions of these and similar engagements, he found occasional intercourse with ministerial friends and others, refreshing to his spirit; for in the precincts of his folded flock at home there had been brooding for some time past an air of discontent. Most painful is it to allude to circumstances of this kind; but faithfulness demands, and a clear understanding of the providential path by which Mr. Pyer was led, requires that it should be done. We have already referred to the heavy debt resting on the chapel at Mount Street; and though some exertions had been made to lessen it, the bulk of it still remained, as an incubus on the energies and pecuniary resources of the people. Now, we believe, the first insiduous working of ill-feeling, arose from the faithful dealing of the pastor regarding this matter. Endowed with a most generous nature himself, he could not understand the niggardly response of many professors to the claims of Christianity; and, with that marked frankness by which he was distinguished, did not hesitate to declare the truth, however unpalatable. One instance, among many, of his generosity we may supply. At this very time, when, during his absence, the financial affairs of the church had been brought forward, and their income being considerably deficient, a proposition was made to reduce the pastor's salary to £100—indignantly rejected, however, by the meeting at large—he, on his return home, finding how matters stood, proposed an extra subscription to meet the emergency, heading the list with £5. Others followed, in donations varying from £2 to 10*s*., and the deficiency was met; and in all similar projects he invariably took the lead. But a still more serious ground of offence was given at a church meeting, held April 22nd, 1844, when two resolutions were brought forward by him, expressing sympathy with the objects of the Liberation Society, then known as the Anti-State Church Association, and proposing Dr. Campbell and the Rev. J. C. Davie (then minister at Wells) to represent them at the Conference about to be held in London. The resolutions were carried with eight dissentients; and these being some of the official members of the church, with their families; for the next two or three years a coldness sprang up between them and the pastor, which was observed with much pain by the church generally. We wish not to cast undue blame on any party; the thorough honesty of the one may have been a little too strongly, or even sternly expressed, while the wounded feelings and pride of the others, prevented their seeking that reconciliation which was desirable. Be this as it may, we are not without evidence that God's blessing followed the course taken, and that out of these deep waters of adversity, a calm unruffled peace, and a large measure of prosperity arose. The misunderstanding referred to, ended at length in the withdrawal of the disaffected members;

and some of them being trustees, a mutual arrangement was entered into respecting the occupancy of the chapel, which gave the church the right of giving up the premises after three months' notice. Other circumstances of a painful and trying nature were also pressing upon him at this time; but throughout this troublous period of his history, his church (at no time either numerous or wealthy) clung to him with unflinching fidelity and affection, and this determined him to remain in their midst. It soon became evident, that the expenses now devolving on a diminished number would not easily be met, and efforts were made to secure a site for building in a more eligible situation. Failing in this attempt, they secured by rental a new building, just completed for a Temperance Hall, and took possession of it as a place of worship the first Sabbath in January, 1851.

SECTION II.

Notwithstanding the ungenial influences at work during the two years previous to this removal, eighteen persons had been added to the church, of whom two had been Wesleyans, two from amongst the "Brethren," one was a student, and the remaining thirteen were the fruits of his own ministry. We have no means of ascertaining the number added to Christian fellowship, during the whole of his ministry at Devonport; but here, as elsewhere, he was made successful to a large extent in bringing sinners to the cross of Christ. As expressive of his feelings under some of these trying dispensations of Divine providence, we give the following extract from a letter, dated July 5th, 1851 :—

"I have no desire to arraign Divine providence. God is infinitely good and gracious to me, and better than all my deservings. Chastisement I have richly merited; and if it were not so, I acknowledge the right of Heaven to deal as seemeth good in his sight. Oh, for grace to bear and suffer, and do all the will of God, with patience and without murmuring! This is what I need, and pray may be granted. At the same time, I know that it is permitted to us to ask for changes and alterations, provided we ask in submission to the Divine will, and are content to be ruled by Him who does all things well. Keeping this in mind, I should be glad to have some things different from what they are, and possibly at some time or other my desire may be granted. If so, I hope to give glory to God; and if not, I trust He will give me grace to go on my way, till death and heaven shall reveal what is now concealed from view."

And in this strain he ever wrote and spoke, concerning the heavy sorrow he had at various times encountered, and the dire affliction which shadowed even his brightest hours.

After worshipping in the Temperance Hall about two years, the attention of the people was directed to a chapel at Morice Town, an immediate suburb of Devonport. This chapel, though formerly belonging to Independents, had been recently occupied by a clergyman of the Church of England, while his own district church was in course of erection. On being vacated, the Dissenters made an effort to secure it again; and application was made to Mr. Pyer to occupy the pulpit permanently. After due consideration, he brought the matter before his church; and finding them willing to accompany him thither—indeed, they gratefully regarded it as an interposition of Providence in their behalf—steps were at once taken in that direction. Their feeble hands were now strengthened, by the accession of some few who had formerly belonged to the place, and many more, who from time to time were added to their number, insomuch that, in a short time, propositions were entertained of securing the chapel by purchase, and making sundry alterations and repairs, which it greatly needed. For this purpose subscriptions were entered into and solicited from others with great spirit, and a bazaar got up by the ladies; altogether producing £500, the amount required for the purchase. Meanwile, negotiations having been entered into with the mortgagee and manor authorities, it was discovered that the title was defective; and they were advised by their valued friend, Mr. A. Rooker, and others, to seek, in preference, further means for erecting a new sanctuary, more worthy of the age in which we live. This was a startling project for so small and comparatively poor a church to entertain; but they had a large-hearted man for their leader, who, being extensively known, and, we must add, highly esteemed, gave them courage to embark in so weighty an enterprise. The foundation of the new building was laid by A. Rooker, Esq., May 7, 1855, and the chapel opened for Divine worship, Thursday, June 26, 1856, by eloquent and appropriate sermons, from the lamented Dr. Harris and the Rev. J. H. Hinton, and on the following Sabbath by the Rev. D. Hewitt of Exeter, closing with a tea-meeting at the Temperance Hall, on Tuesday, July 1. We subjoin a few notices of this important event from the public journals, showing the estimation in which this noble work was regarded by Mr. Pyer's fellow-townsmen:—

"Within a very short period the walls of Wycliffe Chapel were seen to rise from their foundation, and promise early completion. This chapel, so happily named, with reference to the sterling principles and vigorous love of truth of its minister, is situated in a populous and respectable neighbourhood. There is ample room for the ministrations now provided for, and the earnest religious appeals of the reverend gentleman, will be heard with attention and profit, by a congregation capable of appreciating his qualities, and co-operating with him in the good works he will lead. We can only say, that we cordially congratulate Mr. Pyer upon the opening of his chapel, and we congratulate those among whom he is now located in a more regular and established manner."—*Plymouth Journal.*

"We hope the gratitude due to Mr. Pyer—a name familiar to the ears of the Independent body of this city—for the energetic stand he is making against the spread of that moral and religious bane, Tractarianism, will evince itself in substantial contributions to the Wycliffe Chapel fund."—*Western Times.*

"The many friends of the Rev. John Pyer, who have cordially sympathized with him in his noble undertaking, and yielded the succour, without which success could never have been realized, will rejoice to find from another column, that the edifice has been opened under circumstances the most cheering and hopeful. . . . . We congratulate Mr. Pyer on this noble achievement on behalf of religion in that important locality. In addition to a great benefaction to his generation, he has rendered posterity his debtors. We now wish for him a continuance of that health, vivacity, and vigour which have been so eminently subservient to the completion of his laudable enterprise."—*British Banner.*

We must not omit a pleasing incident connected with this memorable event. We give it as recorded in his note-book:—

"Thursday, June 26. Up at five. . . . . Sent for at ten o'clock, and found several of my young people assembled in the drawing-room, to present me with a handsome frame to my portrait.* It was placed on the mantelpiece. Mr. J. addressed me very suitably and affectionately, and presented the gift in the name of thirty-five contributors. This unmanned me. I could scarcely speak for emotion; but managed to reply in a few brief sentences."

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* This was an oil painting, taken by Mr. Room for the "Evangelical Magazine," in 1847, of which our frontispiece is a copy.

"Referring to the opening services, he continues:—

" . . . . I opened with a brief prayer; sung. Mr. Jones read 122nd Psalm and parts of Isaiah li. 52. Mr. Jones prayed suitably and fervently. Dr. Harris preached a magnificent sermon, the best I ever heard from him. My soul melted within me. Dr. Alliot closed. All, especially Dr. H., delighted with the chapel. . . . Full congregation at night. Mr. Short read and prayed; Mr. Hinton preached a good, useful sermon; Mr. Harrison closed. . . . . Glory be to Thee, O Lord, for this happy day! All things went well, and all highly delighted."

In giving this connected sketch of his labours in this enterprise, we have passed over some occurrences in which he took a special interest. It must not be thought that this new undertaking engrossed all his time and energies. While diligently overlooking, and in many ways aiding its progress, other local claims were not forgotten or slighted.

His official connection with the Religious Tract and Missionary Associations of this town, the South Devon Union and Western College, being one of the most active members on the Committee of a large Naval and Military Free School, and likewise of the Mechanics' Institute—all these found him ample employment, and all had no mean share of his time, energy, and influence. Several valuable and instructive lectures were delivered by him at various periods, both in the Mechanics' Institute and to the Young Men's Christian Association, and many of them repeated in kindred institutions in this and the neighbouring county. Indeed it is marvellous to contemplate the vast amount of work which shared his sympathy and toil. Most emphatically did he honour the golden adage—" Better *wear* than *rust* out."

SECTION III.

Mr. Pyer's leading principles being well known, and his intolerance of oppression being patent to everyone who knew him, in May, 1854, he was appealed to by a gentleman in Cornwall, on behalf of a poor but most worthy man, who had been cited to appear at the Ecclesiastical Court, Exeter, for refusing to take off his hat during the funeral services of his mother-in-law, or as it was technically called, "for *brawling*." T. D.'s refusal arose from his being in delicate health, and a strong easterly wind blowing at the time, which, by a medical certificate from the doctor attending him, testified "that it would have been highly improper for him to have stood in a bleak churchyard without his hat." He had also certificates from those present at the funeral, and others in the town, declarative of his quiet, orderly conduct and unblemished character. He was a Wesleyan. The case, which lasted over five months, excited amazing interest at the time; and Mr. Pyer's powerfully written letters, appeared in the weekly journals of this and the adjoining county, and were read with great avidity. Though pressed for room, we are tempted to transcribe the following letter bearing on the case, because, coming from a clergyman of the Church of England, such noble sentiments deserve to be widely known and gratefully honoured:—

"10th *July*. 1854.

"DEAR SIR,—Accept my humble thanks for your letter and the paper. I feel deep interest in the case you have taken up nobly, and pray God it may issue in his glory, and the true spiritual interests of men being advanced and secured. All my own natural sympathy being with the Church, so far as she carries out the glorious principles of the 'blessed gospel of the grace of God,' the more I feel humiliated and indignant by those miserable proceedings of man in her, which call up out of her entrails old poisonous elements; not for the purpose of ridding her of such frail and pestiferous abominations, but of casting them upon all around. I love the Church of England, as she clings to Christ; but I trust I love the members of Christ's Church, wherever they be found, for their Master's sake; and I deeply grieve that so many good men in the Church, seem to love the system more than Him who is Lord of all.

"I rejoice at anything which may, under God, tend to bring about a search into the evils and abuses of the Church, that they may be removed. The Mevagissey case may have this tendency. I therefore heartily bid you God speed; and if in any way I can help, rely upon my doing so to the utmost of my power, so far as my own immediate duties permit. Whilst these are the *general* principles causing me to feel a deep interest in the case, will you permit me, through you, to offer my personal and particular Christian sympathy to the poor man and his wife, who will, I am sure, be supported by the Head of the Church. Bid them remember that it pleases God to 'choose the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.'

"Will you permit me to suggest to you, that an application should be made by you, through Sir C. E., to the Evangelical Alliance. They moved 'heaven and earth' to get two persecuted foreigners justice; they seem very slow to interest themselves about an even more atrocious case at home. Have your meetings by all means; and when you obtain funds, would it not be well to try the justice of the Rev. Tractarian Chancellor, by citing the curate into the court, for he alone is the 'Brawler.' Excuse my forwardness to hint, and believe me to be, very faithfully yours,

"J. E. G."

"To the Rev. John Pyer."

The verdict was given in favour of the defendant, and his own sense of obligation to Mr. Pyer's persevering and untiring efforts, is conveyed in the following note:—

"Mevagissey, *October* 29, 1854.

"DEAR SIR,—I suppose you have heard the decision of the Court in my case. I find I have a full acquittal, which I feel, under Providence, I owe to you. It is impossible for me to convey in words the gratitude I feel to you; it is also impossible for me to reward you for your kindness. I hope that God whom we serve, will reward you tenfold in this world, and reward you with an incorruptible crown in the world to come. We received a 'Western Times' from Mr. Latimer on Saturday—'*Dunn triumphant, and the Parson done.*' I intend writing Mr. L. this week to thank him for his kindness. You will be kind enough to thank Mr. L. of the 'Plymouth Journal' on our behalf for his kindness also. We are, dear sir, your obedient servants,

"T. AND C. DUNN."

We regret not being able to find the Exeter paper in which the above quotation appeared, in a leading article upon the case. From the "Plymouth Journal" we extract the concluding remarks upon the same subject:—

"We commend the excellent advice of the Chancellor to the miserable priest of Mevagissey. We congratulate the people of the town on the defeat of this contemptible suit; we congratulate the defendant, who bears a high character for good conduct and for great moral courage amongst all by whom he is known; and we especially congratulate the Rev. John Pyer for the result; for we believe it is mainly owing to his having made the world acquainted with the merits of this extraordinary case, and following it up with his masterly exposures, that it has been brought to this most satisfactory conclusion."—*Plymouth Journal,* Nov. 2, 1854.

Among the interesting reminiscences of this period, we find the following, in a letter dated London, May 7, 1853:—

"I went to the London Tavern, and witnessed the presentation to Kossuth, of the copy of Shakespere subscribed for by 9000 artisans. Lord Dudley Stuart in the chair. After the chairman's speech, Douglas Jerrold presented the work, and then Kossuth make a glorious harangue. Mr. Wise and Sir Joshua Walmsley followed with short speeches, and then came Cobden, who was quite himself. At the close, he adverted to and introduced Madam Kossuth and family, who were seated in the small music gallery just behind and above the chair. The room was crammed to suffocation; the greatest enthusiasm prevailed, as you may suppose. This I consider a great treat; the more so as it was unexpected by me till this morning."

Shortly after, Devonport was favoured by a visit of the Hungarian patriot; and at the close of his eloquent and impassioned address, listened to with breathless attention by a mass of people, Mr. Pyer moved the following resolution, which he had drawn up, and, in a few sentences of soul-thrilling power, submitted to the meeting. We need hardly say it was carried amid a burst of acclamation:—

"That deeply impressed with the value of civil and religious liberty, rejoicing ourselves in its possession, and asserting the right of all peoples on the face of the earth to its just enjoyment, we hail with unfeigned delight the presence of his Excellency Louis Kossuth in the midst of us, assuring him of our fervid indignation at his country's wrongs, our high admiration of his noble struggles for her independence, and our sincere sympathy with his present disappointments and trials; and while thanking him most heartily for the truthful, eloquent, and instructive lecture delivered in our hearing this evening, would at the same time express our earnest hope, and pour out our fervent prayer, that, in the orderings of Divine providence, he may yet see his beloved Hungary delivered from the crushing oppression of despotic tyranny, and he himself restored to Fatherland, to guide the counsels and preside over the destinies of a patriotic and united, because a free and happy people."

The following year he had an opportunity of seeing another celebrated personage, at that time attracting universal attention. He writes:—

"LONDON, *May* 7, 1853.

"MY DEAR KATE,—You may tell A. her wish is granted, as I have seen Mrs. Stowe. She was at the Congregational Union on Friday for two hours, sat on the platform, and was congratulated, praised, cheered, etc. Saturday, she was at the New College Soirée, where I was also for an hour and a half, and then left her and the company, and went to Croydon. Returned yesterday at noon, and was at the Anti-Slavery Meeting last night. Mrs. Stowe and the Duchess of Sutherland were in the right hand small gallery, near the platform. But such a crowd, and such excitement, I have not seen since the days of D. O'Connell, Lord Brougham, Sir J. Mackintosh, and others. But I cannot go on with descriptions; you must see the papers, and wait till I come home."

We may add, by way of postscript to this detail, that Mrs. Stowe's famous book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was so heartily admired by Mr. Pyer, that he recommended it from the pulpit to the attention of his congregation—a thing we never remember him to have done, except as regards religious periodicals, which were circulated to a large extent amongst his people, and in the Sabbath school.

SECTION IV.

Persons who have had little or nothing to do with building places of worship, can form but a faint idea of the responsibility, anxiety, and labour which it involves. The erection of Wycliffe Chapel rested almost entirely on the shoulders of its pastor, and right manfully he bore the burden, and heroically discharged his trust. A considerable portion of the latter years of his life was devoted to this object, and all the time he could spare from pastoral and other duties was diligently spent in securing help. His letters at this period, are for the most part a running detail of persons and places visited with this end in view, and would not be interesting to the general reader. But that our congregations may have some notion of what such service entails, and learn how gratefully they should honour those who undertake it for Christ's sake, we append a few epistolary extracts bearing on this point:—

"LONDON, *Nov.* 10, 1853.

"MY DEAR KATE,—Tuesday night I was at the Weigh House, and said good-bye to Messrs. Fletcher and Poore, on whose account a service was held there. Mr. Binney told me of the £20 voted from Coward's Trust, and yesterday I was at Dr. Burder's, who confirmed the statement. It is kind in the trustees to do this, and shows their respect for your father, as it is not every case which has their sympathy. I had a tremendous hard day's work yesterday. Went to the city early, but could do nothing there, it being Lord Mayor's Show Day; and the weather being so fine, tempted all the sight-seers, put a stop to business, and filled the streets with thousands upon thousands."

And then follows an account of his walks to Piccadilly, Pimlico, Clapton, etc., etc. An interview with Dr. Burden is noted thus—"Had half an hour's chat with Dr. B. about good old Dr. Payne, when he was pleased to express his high satisfaction with my performance in the memoir." And the account of his begging expedition is thus concluded—"I am now about to set off on another tour, and hope to be successful; but the consumption of time and strength is enormous, in getting to see even a few, and leaves me no time to visit and enjoy hospitalities with old friends. Well, I believe it is God's work I am doing, and this reconciles me to all the toil." Two days later, he writes—"I have a few more sovereigns, and have prepared the way in several quarters for doing something additional in the spring. . . . . But I am tired of wandering, and want to be at home. Hitherto I have kept up pretty well, and got through a good deal; but it is tiresome work. And yet it must be done."

"LONDON, *Oct.* 26, 1855.

"Joshua Wilson and others tell me that the case is in good hands, that I am the man for doing it, and that I shall get the money. I hope they will prove to be true prophets. However, it is something to have the good opinion of valuable and right-hearted men; and certainly I shall leave no method untried."

The sad intelligence contained in the next paragraph was conveyed in a letter to his daughter:—

"I have no other news from here; but from a distance sad and heavy tidings. This morning's post brought me a letter from Mr. Newth to say, 'Our beloved Dr. Harris gently fell asleep in Jesus yesterday afternoon. The blow has come upon us so suddenly that we scarcely yet realize it. Our loss is great, his gain far greater. Not our will, but Thine, O Lord, be done.' This is sad—it makes me feel so—yet it is all right, and will be explained by and by. I must now go to a meeting of the Examination Committee at the College; and to-night I lecture to the Young Men's Christian Association. Good-bye, dear. God bless you. All join in love with "YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

In the autumn of 1857 he visited Liverpool with his chapel case, under the kind patronage of his friend Mr. J. R. Jeffery. From correspondence in connection with this visit we make a few selections :—

"LIVERPOOL, *May* 28, 1857.

"Yesterday I called on a large number, and was greatly wearied by nightfall. I met everywhere with great cordiality and admiration of the case; but so many projects in chapel building are going on just now, that parties declare they are too much pledged to various efforts in their own locality, to allow of their contributing to cases at a distance. However, I have got a few pounds, and shall certainly have some more. . . . . I find it rather hard work so much walking—Liverpool is so increased; and though there are omnibusses, they are hardly available for my purposes." "June 1.—I have been toiling hard, and am getting from four to five pounds per day; but there is much ground to go over yet, for so many are out when I call, I have to go in some cases three or four times before I find them. . . . . Sunday morning I heard Dr. Raffles—a good sermon. In the evening, I preached. Mr. J. and I supped with the Doctor after, and spent an hour pleasantly. The Doctor is the same hearty, genial being he ever was. He thanked me most cordially for my sermon, so did the deacons, and so have many more whom I met with both yesterday and to-day. . . . . It is glorious weather, and I have invitations to go and see all sorts of things, and to visit all kinds of scenes and people;

but I am deaf to all until my work is done. Mr. J. is all kindness; but his business is so engrossing, he can give but little personal help." "June 7.—It is useless to lament that I cannot go to Manchester and elsewhere now. It takes up so much time to go over this Liverpool, that it is impossible to do the work quicker. As it is, I assure you I work harder, and walk more, than I would do in any other cause. . . . . And now about my doings here. I have got £61, and £14 in London; but I have met with many disappointments. . . . . All that I have obtained, except the J.'s have been from Independents. Yesterday morning Mr. J. gave me the names and addresses of eleven Baptists. I have written to each, and am to go to them Monday and Tuesday. This morning I heard Mr. Birrell (Baptist), and stayed the ordinance. Mr. B. sent for me to the vestry, and asked me to preach this evening. I consented, and was glad to do so, as it will make me known to the congregation, and help me, I hope, in my calls. . . . . Every moment has been occupied, and I have walked myself almost off my legs."

The result of this visit altogether was £80, including a donation of £5 from Mr. Ash, of Bristol, on his way home; but it will be readily seen, at what an expense of labour such efforts are made. One of his largest contributors in Liverpool, was a gentleman deeply interested in the cause at Llandudno, a beautiful watering-place in North Wales, just then coming into notoriety. Mr. Pyer's introduction to this gentleman, was the means of his being invited to supply the pulpit a couple of Sabbaths in the ensuing summer. A description of his visit to the Menai Bridge, etc., while there, will form an interesting variety and relief, to the business cast of the last few extracts:—

"LLANDUDNO, *June* 23, 1858.

"MY DEAR KATE,— . . . On Monday I went with a large party on board a beautiful steamer, 'The Fairy,' to Menai Straits and Bridge. A glorious morning, and the sail delightful. As soon as we landed, the whole were off in different directions—some into the woods to enjoy their pic-nic, others in flys, cars, etc., to different points. I and several others, walked up to and over the magnificent Suspension Bridge; and then finding it was but a mile further to the Britannia Tubular Bridge, I walked on to that, entered the tube, ascended to the top to enjoy the view, etc. . . . . I now had a delightful ramble to various interesting points, and surveyed the whole scene. Both sides of the straits are covered with well-cultivated fields or luxuriant foliage, and studded with gentlemen's seats, houses of a less pretentious style, and numerous cottages. I should tell you in coming here, we passed and called at Beaumaris and Bangor, of both of which towns I had good views. Tuesday morning, after breakfast, I got upon an omnibus, and started for Llanberris, eight miles. Got into chat with a gentleman; found he was from Exeter, and anxious to ascend Snowdon. We set off together, taking a lad with us. It was a tremendous walk of five miles, over a broken horse-path, of the most uneven surface, and covered with loose stones all the way. It was up, up, up—nothing but up; and for the latter half like the roof of a house for steepness. My friend complained of his legs giving way; mine, however, were strong enough, the only difficulty I found was a lack of breath. It was also tremendously hot, so that the perspiration pressed through every garment. We passed two or three parties on the road, and met some returning who had given up the task. But on we went, and at length the scene burst upon us in all its glory. We were exactly two hours and a half in accomplishing the task—a less time than some took who had gone up on ponies. We found five or six parties up there, consisting of some thirty persons. There are two temporary huts where refreshments are supplied. I got some coffee and bread and butter, and then turned out and gazed. But I cannot describe; you must have patience. The scene, however, was glorious. We stayed above an hour, and I could have lingered all day. In an hour and a half we were at the Victoria Hotel, Llanberris, and in another hour and a half back to Carnarvon," etc.

"LLANDUDNO, *June* 26.

"MY DEAR KATE,— . . . . Yesterday after breakfast I ascended the Great Orme's Head, and and thoroughly explored the whole mountain, going from one eminence to another, to the mines, telegraph station, and all round the outer edge, that I might have the several views on each side. I did not descend till four o'clock, and at five got back to Fronteg, and had a hearty meal. The views vary considerably, but on the land side are mostly made up of mountains of different elevations, and in some respects of different aspects; while the sea view is relieved by steamers, ships, and lesser craft of various descriptions. After tea, I spent an hour or two at Captain V.'s, who showed me some beautiful specimens of copper ore, crystallized copper, etc. These, seen through his microscope, were exceedingly rich and full of beauty. Two or three other Cornish friends came in, and we had some pleasant chat; a walk by moonlight, in the solitude of the evening, to and fro by the head of the bay, finished the day. The air here is very bracing, so that I am not over tired, but the sun and wind have skinned my face; at least the sun so burnt the skin on Tuesday in ascending Snowdon, that after being sore two or three days, it is now beginning to peel off. To-day I have been mostly within, reading, etc.; indeed, the day from early morning has been cloudy, windy, and cold. . . . . Glad should I have been, dear Kate, if you could have been with me here. I have often thought so when wandering about alone, especially finding myself to be the only person in a solitary condition, all the rest being found in pairs or groups of different numbers; but so it is, and I suppose it is better to submit than to complain. . . . . The afternoon is very sombre, and I am getting so too, so shall say no more than that I am, as ever,

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

His last note from this place closes with anticipations which, alas! were never verified:—"They are very urgent at Llandudno for me to repeat my visit next year; but this I tell them I shall not do, unless it be for three or four Sabbaths. This would enable me to have you with me. But we must wait and see what next year will produce." How little did either of us think, as, in glowing terms of admiration, he dwelt upon the beauties of that charming spot, and hopefully imagined we might *together* revel in its glorious scenes, that ere the time arrived for the realization of such hopes, *he* should be basking in the sunlight of a holier and brighter sphere, while his bereaved ones would be mourning beside his grass-grown grave, with only his precious memory and illustrious example to inspire courage in their fainting hearts. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

> "Only since our souls will shrink
>   At the touch of natural grief,
> When our earthly loved ones sink,
>   Send us, Lord, thy sure relief—
> Patient hearts, their pain to see,
> And thy grace to follow Thee."

In October, 1858, he set forth on his last begging expedition to Bristol, the "case" having been duly examined, and the time for its presentation appointed, by the Board of Ministers. His notes at this time manifest the same persevering zeal in the prosecution of his work, and devout acknowledgment of Divine favour in rendering it successful.

"BRISTOL, *Oct.* 28, 1858.

"MY DEAR KATE,—I am still labouring hard, and getting a few pounds each day. Yesterday it was very fine weather, and I walked till I was thoroughly knocked up, having traversed some twenty miles at the least." Then follows a description of places and people he had seen, etc.; and with these sentences concludes—"Although I have got £66 16*s.* 6*d.*, I have yet three or four days' work to do, and hope to get a little more, so as to have £60 at least, clear of expenses. . . . . My preaching at "Highbury" and "Ashley" has helped me considerably. Kindest love to you, dear Kate, to aunt, and all the rest, from

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

In another note, he says—"And now, dear Kate, I think we must be grateful for the goodness God has shown to us, and learn more entirely to trust Him for the future. I believe we shall still be helped, until every fraction of the debt is removed, and we have the premises entirely free."

"BRISTOL, *Nov.* 2, 1858.

. . . . . "Yesterday morning and afternoon I made several calls; in the evening, went to Durdham Park, to settle with Mr. V. (secretary to the Board). After tea, we cast up the books, and found I had gathered (including Mr. Ash's £5 last year) £74 11*s.* 6*d.* Mr. V. said, 'I will make it £80;' and then, putting his own name, and the names of his two brothers, for £2 each, made the total

£80. 11*s*. 6*d*. So you see I got £10 yesterday. . . . . The folks here think I have done amazingly well, as no case for some time past has obtained more than £40, and some considerably less. Let us thank God and take courage."

Just on the eve of returning home, he was waited on by Mr. S., one of the Highbury deacons, and urgently requested to remain another Sabbath, and preach for them, in the protracted absence of their pastor. This he felt he could not well refuse, as they had been so "kind in subscribing to our case." He had then an opportunity of getting a trifle more, from two or three he could not previously see; called on the ministers to thank them and say good-bye; and, in a closing paragraph of his note, says (alluding to some information we had given him)—"I am sorry to hear of the deaths you mention, but not exactly surprised, for we live in a dying world, and know not who may be next summoned away." Similar sentiments we had often heard him express, showing the calmness and familiarity with which he thought upon the subject; and, taken in connection with his own unlooked-for summons, a few months later, it is rather a remarkable coincidence. He stopped at Exeter a night, on his return journey; and, for the last time, delivered a lecture to the Young Men's Christian Association in that city.

Early in the year 1859, while visiting, at Penzance, a son of one of his earliest friends, who also bore his name (the Rev. John Pyer Barnett), his two last notes to his daughter were written. The following extracts will prove the heartiness with which he still laboured to be useful, *that* ever seeming to be the acme of his hopes and ambition:—

"DEVONPORT, *Jan.* 8, 1859.

. . . . "Wednesday night, I was at Mr. Short's tea-meeting, and gave them a speech. Thursday, after our service, I went to the Temperance Hall; heard Messrs. G. and J. about insurance, and moved a resolution. They had a good gathering. Last night, Mr. J. lectured on total abstinence; I took the chair. Yesterday, I called upon a number of poor people. All well, and kind love to you from everybody, and from

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER."

P.S.—"I send you the 'Patriot.' There is an interesting account of Mr. Binney's leaving Australia. We shall yet occupy the pulpits of the Church of England, in 'the good time coming.'"

"DEVONPORT, *Jan.* 10, 1859.

. . . . "We had a blessed Sabbath yesterday. The weather fine; congregations larger than for some time past; several strangers at night, and apparently a blessed influence. The Sunday-school Union Prayer-Meeting closed the day."

We have thus been brought to the last few months of Mr. Pyer's valuable and useful life; but further remarks, and the incidents bearing more directly on the remnant of his days, we reserve for our concluding chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAST DAYS, GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS, ETC.

"He lay as death did seem,
But as a dream that he had dreamed before;
All peaceful as the face of Sabbath morn.
The stern, white silence had a starry touch,
As his last look had caught the first of heaven,
The meekened witness of another world."

ANON.

SECTION I.

FROM the foregoing pages it will be seen that Mr. Pyer's was pre-eminently an *earnest* life. If we were not careful to compress as much as possible the material from which we compile our narrative, it would swell to a large volume; but we are more concerned to present a faithful portraiture of the leading characteristics of his mind, the consecrated actions of his life, in the hope that they may be emulated, and even excelled by others, than to impose upon the Christian public a huge, tautological, and uninteresting book.

One of the latest labours of his life, extraneous to his own special business as a Pastor, was to assist in the compilation of the New Congregational Hymn-

book. And that his researches and emendations were of the most painstaking character, we have abundant proof in the *linear* corrections left on proof sheets amongst his papers, as well as from the testimony of the Rev. R. Ashton, who acknowledges the receipt of his "very valuable communication respecting the hymn-book," and is greatly obliged for his "thorough and careful examination of the proof." The 803rd hymn, beginning "Met again in Jesu's name," was his own composition. Additional to the information already supplied, we make a few selections from his daily memoranda, which indicate the bias of his inner life, amid the multifarious cares and responsibilities of the outer:—
"Friday, Sept. 12, 1856.—Reading, and with workmen. In the evening read 'Tent Methodist Magazine,' and was humbled in reviewing the past."

"Lord's Day, October 26th.—A blessed Sabbath. Preached with comfort, and had good congregations. Felt after evening service that I had not been so tender and affectionate in my appeals as I should have been."

About fifteen months after the new chapel was opened, a very solemn event occurred, which he thus records; and it is not a little remarkable that eighteen months afterwards, his own removal in an equally solemn and affecting manner took place, when the very words he chose as an improvement of the circumstance in Mr. B.'s case, were the foundation of the funeral sermon preached for himself by the Rev. J. Horton:—

"Lord's Day, Sept. 20, 1857.—A sad occurrence to-day. Just as I was reading the first verse of the first hymn from the pulpit this morning, W. B., who had just before come in, fell from his seat. He was taken into my house, and medical relief was directly at hand; but in less than five minutes he expired, from disease of the heart. I was ignorant of his departure till after the service closed, and was graciously carried through my duties. The subject I had been led yesterday to select was singularly appropriate to the disturbed state of the congregation, 'In your patience, possess ye your souls.' In the afternoon I went down, and saw his poor wife; greatly shocked, but endeavouring to confide in God. At night the service was specially solemn; 'Be ye also ready,' etc., the text. All parties greatly solemnized by the event. He, good man, was fully prepared. His piety was undoubted, and his walk truly consistent for many years. His body was removed in the evening.

"December 3, 1857.—Another birthday. Oh merciful Father, how good art Thou! Now for a fresh surrender.

"December 24.—Read dear Lissie's memoir through; humbled, but refreshed in spirit. Oh! these retrospections! how sad, and yet how joyful! Spoke to-night of the *everlastingness* of heaven, and was edified.

"Lord's Day, April 18, 1858.—Preached with more comfort than I deserved. Closed the Sabbath thoughtfully and prayerfully.

Friday, December 3, 1858. — My birthday (his last). In health, outward comfort, and a hope in the Divine mercy, blessed be God. Oh! the infinite forbearance and mercy of my heavenly

Father! May I have grace to glorify Him more abundantly! Reading; then calls on J. E. J., etc. News-room. Cooper's lecture on 'Historical Evidences of Christianity' excellent; no controversy.

"BODMIN, Wednesday, December 15.—By 'bus to Liskard (to give his lecture on 'Character'). Home before five o'clock; all well. In going and returning, read 'English Hearts and Hands'—a capital book, showing how good may be attempted and accomplished.

"Lord's Day, December 5.—Selected subjects preparatory to our united prayer-meetings for a revival, and had liberty and comfort in preaching. Ordinance service very precious.

"Friday, December 31.—Service at half-past ten to a quarter-past twelve. Very precious; about eighty present. This concluded the old and commenced the New Year. Read an hour afterwards in 'Barnes,' and thought, I hope, profitably."

Thus was ushered in his last New Year's Day on earth. His address on the occasion was founded on Psa. xx. 7, "We will remember the name of the Lord;" and in his usual happy manner, he drew encouragement from God's past dealings with us as individuals, and as a church, to trust Him for the future. Alas! how little did we think what that future would so rapidly unfold—what a dark shadow was even then beclouding the new-born year! Far different would have been our emotions on this joyous occasion, when Pastor and people responsively gave utterance to the customary salutation, "A happy New Year to you;" but the future is wisely and mercifully hidden from our view. In his case the kindly-uttered wish was emphatically and speedily answered, though not in the way our feeble faith and clinging affection would have desired—

"Alas! we would have kept him here,
And stretched our hope to some far year,
Crowned with a contest won!
Unheeding how beneath our view
The ripeness of his spirit grew,
In weariness of sin and strife,
In gentle weanedness from life,
Telling his work was done!"

The subject of the American revivals was at this time exciting great attention in the Christian church, and at a very early period Mr. Pyer brought it under the notice of his people, and sought to catch and to diffuse something of the same hallowed spirit amongst them. He procured a number of the Rev. J. A. James's addresses, and had them distributed throughout the chapel, urging from the pulpit their prayerful reading and consideration. A series of united weekly prayer-meetings were arranged to be held, alternately, in the various places of worship in the town, and these services he thoroughly entered into, and zealously watched over. The deep fervour, earnestness, and wrestling importunity of his supplications on these occasions, will not soon be forgotten by those who were privileged to hear and to respond to them. Neither the touching and powerful appeals which occasionally fell from his lips, in unison with his ministerial brethren. In connection with these meetings, an address was drawn up by him, unanimously adopted, and printed for general distribution. The town and its suburbs was divided into districts, and one in its own vicinity assigned to each chapel. In this way between six and seven thousand copies were circulated, calling the attention of the people to their woeful neglect of public worship, and pressing upon them the claims of the Gospel. His own Monday evening prayer-meetings seem to have been specially enjoyed by him at this season. They are thus briefly noted:—

"January 3, 1859.—More out than usual, and a precious service.

"January 17.—Fair attendance, and a very solemn service.

"Lord's Day, January 30.—Preached at half-past ten, and enjoyed a most blessed service. Some testified afterwards of the comfort they had felt. Evening: Good, but not so enlivening as the morning service.

"January 31.—Prayer-meeting at seven. Very blessed. Will not good be done? Lord, send down the abundant blessing.

"Monday, February 21.—A very precious service.

"March 14.—Prayer-meeting at seven. Very precious. Was informed of several anxious to join the church."

From the memoranda drawn up by the writer, and published in the "Christian Witness," in the September number, 1859, we transcribe an account of the closing scenes of Mr. Pyer's singularly devoted life, as they contain a faithful record of the circumstances immediately attendant upon his *last days;* which, though deeply engraven on memory's page, might, we fear, suffer some deterioration in description, from the length of time in which they have been embalmed.

The early dawn of the year 1859 was consecrated, as we have already seen, in solemn covenant with his God, amid a company of the faithful in the "house of prayer." That day is sealed with this sweet memento :—

"January 1.—Serious, holy thoughts to-day."

And this was followed by a Sabbath of great spiritual refreshment :—

"Lord's Day, January 2.—Blessed services. Ordinance very precious. Greatly drawn out in the last prayer.

"Lord's Day, January 9.—Preached with freedom and apparent power. Good congregations. Several strangers in the evening. A blessed Sabbath."

In the month of February, a social church tea-meeting was held, when several plans were freely discussed calculated to promote a revival of religion amongst the church members, and excite them to more vigorous efforts for the salvation of those around them. The spirit and tone of the whole proceedings were of so delightful a character, that it was suggested to hold similar meetings quarterly; and as the year had so far advanced, in order to bring four such meetings within its compass, it was proposed that the next should be held on the 12th of April. Alas! the day thus joyously nominated, witnessed the committal of his body to the tomb, amid the tears and bewailings of many hundreds, who made "great lamentation over him."

On the morning of March 23, his daughter, knocking as usual at his bed-room door, to announce breakfast, was desired to enter, when she found him suffering from violent pain in the chest, which, he said, "had broken his rest," and which he designated as rheumatism. He thought he had taken cold at the cemetery the Monday previous, at the interment of an aged member of the congregation, it having been a very bleak, windy day. The application of a mustard-poultice, and other simple remedies, gave relief, so that, although our Thursday evening lecture was suspended (a prayer-meeting being substituted), by the following day (Friday) he was able to preside at the united prayer-meeting held in his own chapel, and conducted the service in the most impressive manner, though suffering from great debility. The earnestness of his appeals, the selection and reading of the hymns, particularly the closing one—

"Saviour, breathe an evening blessing,"

and the exquisite pathos and heart-breathing fervour of his valedictory prayer, in which he gave vent to his own highly-satisfied feelings in an expression to this effect—"Thine, dear Jesus, is a blessed service—one that leaves no sting behind; we would willingly spend and be spent for Thee," made a powerful and general impression. The excessive pain he had suffered, and the remedies used to remove it, gave an unusual languor and pallor to his countenance; and as he pathetically alluded to the probability of our not all meeting again, and the possibility of some being called into the invisible world ere the morning's dawn, the thought thrilled through us—what if it should be the case with himself? But we quickly dismissed it as a nervous fancy, for which there was no valid foundation. His own comment on that evening's service was—"The best meeting we have yet had. So all said at the close. Prayers more direct, specific, fervent." A fortnight after, a friend called to shed her tears of sympathy upon his coffin, and told us she was present at this service, and never remembered Mr. Pyer more earnest or impressive; so much so, that on leaving the sanctuary, she said to a nephew who accompanied her, "Edward, it strikes me Mr. Pyer is not long for this world. He seems to be on the borders of heaven." The following Sabbath morning he preached most delightfully from these words:—"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," saying that the subject had been impressed on his mind ever since the Friday evening's meeting. In the evening he discoursed with great tenderness and power from our Saviour's lament over Jerusalem, Luke xiii. 34. His private memorandum is—"Preached at half-past ten and half-past six. Got through better than I had anticipated. Fair congregations, and some power with the Word. The savour of the Friday evening meeting still remains."

The succeeding evening prayer-meeting is thus noted:—"Large attendance, and a most blessed meeting." Upon this occasion he read an affecting narrative of the death of a young Christian, from one of our periodicals, and dwelt with evident pleasure upon the blessedness of such a scene. It was a busy week, and as each day brought its new duties and cares, his wonted elasticity and vigour seemed to return. On Thursday evening, he addressed us from Matt. v. 3; and at the close of the public service a church meeting was held, to receive into Christian fellowship four new members, three of whom were sisters. The season was one of great interest, especially Mr. Pyer's address to the newly-admitted members. At its close, he adverted to the probability, "that as he had welcomed them into the church below, he might be the first to welcome their entrance into heaven." Strangely prophetic words! Two other candidates were also proposed—young men—teachers in our Sabbath school. After noting the service in his diary, he adds, with characteristic brevity, "Most blessed." It is nearly the last entry in his daily note-book, and by no means an unenviable finish to his pastoral work.

The Sabbath came—his last Sabbath on earth. Oh, could we but have known the solemn fact, how much more diligently might we not have treasured up those glorious truths he was ever placing before us so faithfully. In the morning, he improved the death of a member of the congregation, whom he had visited in his illness, and who left a large family to deplore his loss. The whole sermon was singularly prophetic of his own, as yet, hidden destiny; and, as was afterwards remarked, might have been a funeral discourse for himself. It was founded on Job xxiii. 16; and some of his illustrations were so remarkably accordant with events which closely followed, that we may be permitted to transcribe them.

After remarking that a softened heart was a great blessing—that the heart naturally was in a state of hardness, and could only be subdued by Divine power—he instanced some of the means employed by God to soften and subdue it—

"I. Sometimes, by unlooked-for and providential events, He changeth times and seasons; works after the counsel of his own will among men, as nations, tribes, families, individuals, temporal pursuits, family circumstances, *sudden bereavements.*

"II. By unanticipated personal sickness and infirmity. Man is a frail creature at the best, liable to be crushed as a moth before the wind. Yet some are comparatively *strong, athletic, robust; but He changeth our countenance and sendeth us away.*

"III. By unusual displays of his presence and glory.

"IV. The ends accomplished by God in softening the heart. In all his ways toward us, and dealings with us, there is a purpose. Thus He teaches—

"1. Increased submission to the Divine will. Sinful hardness of heart produces and fosters impatience, fretfulness, murmuring with dispensations and under trials. These are rebellious passions; their indulgence renders us uneasy, discontented. But, in a softened state of mind, these are subdued—we see our demerit; admit our folly, worldliness, vanity; and are willing to submit.

"2. Enlarged sympathy with our suffering brethren of mankind. Dependence upon each other; right we should feel for the woes of others, help them in the hour of distress. The genius of Christianity teaches us this. Admit its truth and righteousness. Only felt in a softened heart.

"3. More close walking with God. This is the high privilege of the believer, the pursuit in which he should spiritually live, move, and have his being. God knows it is so. To fit us for it, He softens the heart; and then—how precious!

"4. A larger meetness for the enjoyments of heaven. A soft heart is a benevolent, purified, affectionate heart. The region of everlasting blessedness is the region of pure, perfect, disinterested love and affection. Rejoice that God has not delivered us over to the hardness of our hearts. Provided in Christ the methods of his grace, that man's heart might be subdued to God.

"Let us beware of the sinfulness of a hardened state of heart. 'Who hath hardened his heart and prospered?' 'To-day harden not your hearts.' Let us all pray that God may bestow a softened heart."

How striking were these thoughts, especially when viewed in connection with the solemn and mournful event of the succeeding Thursday!

In the afternoon of that last Sabbath, Mr. Pyer visited the Sabbath school, to present a book to one of the scholars, who was leaving the school creditably. His address to her was faithful and affectionate, urging the duty of daily secret prayer and study of the Bible; and while the classes were being dismissed, he sat on the form by her side, with one arm round the child's waist, and, with all the tenderness of a father, continued to talk with her.

The evening sermon was explanatory of the Lord's Supper; text, 1 Cor. ii. 26. Amongst other appropriate remarks, he denominated it—

"1. A feast of remembrance.

"2. A feast of communion with the Saviour.

"3. A feast of fellowship with believers.

"4. A feast of obligation upon all the followers of the Lamb.

"The dispositions we should cherish in approaching the table of the Lord—

"1. A deep sense of our personal demerit, and humble reliance on the all-sufficient propitiation.

"2. Adoring gratitude for the benefits secured and participated; serious as death, happy as an angel.

"3. Longing desires for larger measures of grace and holiness.

"4. Fervid charity towards all the household of God.

"5, Devout attachment to the cause of our redeeming Saviour."

The ordinance service, held immediately after, was peculiarly refreshing, and became the subject of general remark. Upon leaving the sanctuary, two of our members were observed conversing together; and, upon inquiry into the subject of their conversation, one of them, after a little hesitation, said, "Why, I was telling Mr. F. I really thought Mr. Pyer was ripening for heaven, for I never heard anything like his heavenly and impressive manner, especially of late." His daughter, assenting to the good woman's latter remark, replied, with a smile, "Oh, I hope many years before that, Mrs. G." And he was then but *three days'* journey from the vale so many dread to enter—to him the portal of everlasting life.

In the afternoon of the following day, a united prayer-meeting for China, was held in King Street Chapel (Bible Christians). He attended, but did not officiate. In the evening, at seven, our own missionary prayer-meeting, at which he read extracts of missionary intelligence, as usual, and selected for reading the 39th Psalm. Another remarkable coincidence, as the last act of public worship amongst, and with his people. Many clustered around him, as was their wont, at the close of these ever-memorable services, which he often designated as most precious to his own soul, and most conducive to his spirituality. Alas! alas! it was the last look of love; the last manly, true-hearted grasp of the pastor's hand, many, most of them, shared.

On Tuesday, his garden occupied the morning hours, a committee meeting the afternoon, and at six o'clock we dined, and spent the evening with some dear and valued friends, in quiet social converse.*

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* We cannot forbear noting that at the time we write, five years later, *three* out of the little company then gathered together, have entered the "mansions of our Father's house." Very recently the shadow of death has fallen upon that hospitable house, and the beloved friend who entertained us, and who had been married from Mr. Pyer's house, and by his officiating hand, is left a widow, and her children fatherless.

Wednesday morning he attended the Western College Committee, in Plymouth, returning, in company with a brother minister (Rev. A. Hampson), to a two o'clock dinner. Another minister called in the afternoon, on a matter of business, and sat with him in his study for half an hour. The evening found him again in his garden, and the day closed in the midst of his much-loved books. "Mrs. Schimmelpennick's Memoirs," "Stroud, on the Death of Christ," and "Morris's Words for the Heart and Life," were amongst the last he perused, besides his ever daily companion, the blessed Bible. On this last evening of his life, another of our Sabbath-school teachers was to have called for conversation respecting union with the Church, but was unavoidably detained from coming, greatly to his after disappointment and grief. Two or three other individuals in the congregation—one of whom had been sceptically inclined—had had serious conversation with Mr. Pyer only a few weeks before.

Thursday morning, April 7th, he appeared in his usual health and cheerfulness at the breakfast-table, talked of several matters connected with our little church—such as arrangements for the social meetings before alluded to, distribution of addresses, and our projected loan tract society. He looked over the leading article in the "Nonconformist," as it lay open before him, while sipping his coffee, and then went to the room of his only sister, who for the last three years had come to reside with him, and conducted family worship; all without the slightest intimation or suspicion that anything unusual was about to happen. In a few minutes more, he had retired to his study, his daughter to her school duties in the room beneath, where, until twelve o'clock, she was busily engaged with her young pupils. Just at that hour, a call at the door took the servant into the study, and revealed the startling, terrible discovery, that the spirit of her precious, noble-hearted, father was no longer with us! He was found sitting in his accustomed posture in his arm-chair, with a face calm and unruffled as an angel's—literally "fallen asleep in Jesus." And who can depict the joyful surprise of his disembodied spirit, as, evidently without a dying pang or struggle, he glided into the life which is eternal.

To that chair, from which his sanctified spirit passed away, a history belongs: it was the gift of the *ladies* in his congregation, soon after his settlement in Cork; and its presentation was accompanied by the following playful, yet touching, lines, the production of a beloved friend, whose contributions to some of the periodicals of the Religious Tract Society have often proved instructive, who has for years been a most valued correspondent of the writer's, and who takes a melancholy and pleasing interest in the circumstance recorded above; though no such incident could have been further from her thoughts, when the lines were originally penned:

"THE PROMISE PERFORMED.

" Dear Pastor, the muse who so often has broken
Her promise of welcome, now bears you a token,
To prove that she has not forgotten her word,
Although its performance has long been deferred.
She is sent on this mission, dear sir, by a *few*

Who desire, with myself, to say welcome to you.
She rides not her Pegasus now through the air,
But waits at your gate in a plain easy chair,
Intending full soon to relinquish her place
To one, who far better the station will grace.
When, on Saturday evening, your musings are o'er,
And your text and your sermon perplex you no more;
On Monday, when wearied by labour gone by,
To nod for an hour in your chair you may try.
Oh! then may your rest and your slumber be sweet,
And dream that you hear us our welcome repeat."

* * * * * *

Over the heartrending scenes which followed the astounding intelligence of Mr. Pyer's sudden removal, a veil must be drawn. No language can describe the poignancy of grief, the utter desolation, the almost despair, the first shock occasioned; stout-hearted men wept tears of sympathy, to say nothing of the more tender and impressible portion of the community. But a merciful and gracious God made good his own promise: "As thy day is, thy strength shall be." We must believe "He doeth all things well."

The interment took place on Tuesday afternoon, April 12th, in the cemetery at Mannamead, which was thus referred to in the local papers: "Seldom, we imagine, in these towns, has such a funeral train been seen; it was composed of more than thirty vehicles, and a vast number of followers on foot. Had the weather been fine, it is not too much to say that thousands would have testified their respect for the deceased by following his remains to the grave."

"At a quarter to two, the body was removed from Wycliffe House to the chapel adjoining, where a crowded congregation had assembled, comprising a large number of ministers of various denominations, attendants upon his ministry, and many personal friends. The service was commenced by singing—nor will it soon be forgotten with what struggling emotion the young minister, formerly a student, and ever a strongly attached friend of the deceased, discharged this part of the service. Then followed the Rev. G. Geden (Wesleyan), who read the 15th chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, and offered an impressive prayer. Another hymn was sung, and the Rev. A. Hampson delivered a touching elegy upon the departed, which we give entire:—

"In taking the part assigned me in the solemnities of this day, I must needs be brief. And yet the saying that 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,' might easily be verified, if only the heart's emotions could be fittingly restrained. This occasion is to us without a precedent. This assembly is gathered about an unusual event. This scene has never before been witnessed within these walls. Hearts are beating here with a strange and painful emotion. Only for the unfailing consolations of the gospel, which are not wanting to chasten our grief, that grief might well flow unrestrained. But I speak to those who are not strangers to that consoling medium, to whom the mystery of death is solved, and whose thoughts rise beyond it, to a life and an immortality which have been unsealed; who, standing at the grave, look onward to a resurrection; and to whom the gloom and sadness of this day's proceedings are lightened by the assurance of a 'life everlasting.' Around that coffin our hopes gather. Faith rises triumphant and sublime above our sorrow! At the bier of our departed friend we exclaim with the Apostle: 'O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Privileged to labour with him in the 'kingdom of Christ,' in the same town; honoured by ranking with him under the same ecclesiastical polity; above all, serving ever, with unbroken cordiality, as a son with a father, in the gospel—I desire to lay my tribute of love and friendship on his tomb. Not for me is it to depict the devoted labour, the untiring energy, the sacrificing zeal, or the singleness of aim, the integrity of life, the transparency of character, which belonged to him. Nor yet to enter into the inner sanctuary, and tell of the pure heart, the consecrated purpose, the conscientious and sanctified dedication of intellect—all which shone in his fulfilment of the holy ministry to which he was given. Nor must I dwell upon the wisdom of his counsels, the steadiness of his friendship, the honesty of his reproofs, the sincerity of his approbation, the fidelity of his confidences, or the tenderness of his heart, which was displayed in them all. Enough to say, that we recall these things with a grateful, although it be a mournful memory, and rejoice that his record is on high. Most of us, if not all, will have occasion to remember long the faithful friend, the wise counsellor, the brother in the Lord, and the father in the ministry, whose loss we are called to mourn. A truer word has not been spoken—a truer word will not be spoken, than was said in the public journal of the town: 'In his death it is not only his family, congregation, and denomination, that are mourners; but the inhabitants of Devonport at large have sustained a loss that will not soon be made up to them.' There are few who possess an individuality so prominent and distinctive as was his. It seems to remain with us in its influence still; and I anticipate your ready assent, when I say, that its pre-eminent features were truth and tenderness. In every walk of life, in connection with public and private duty, in relation to works of benevolence, or to personal friendship—but especially in the fulfilment of his high vocation—they shone with no dim lustre. Parent, citizen, friend, and minister—never more true than when most tender; never so tender as when he was most true; we magnify the grace of God which was in him. Possessed of the sinful humanity which belongs to us all, yet to him 'to live was Christ,' and 'to die was gain.' Energy unbroken, life strong, activity unimpaired, usefulness still increasing, and—he died. The will of the Lord be done! His wisdom, goodness, and truth in this event—in its time, its manner, and its circumstances—we cannot for a moment doubt. Faith and humble acquiescence will calm the soul, even while quivering under the heavy stroke. May we possess them both this day! You, my beloved brethren in the ministry, will forgive me for not presuming to speak a word of counsel to you. But if I may be permitted to think the feeling of my heart to-day is at all the counterpart of your own, I would say this affecting removal of our brother from our midst, speaks with amazing power the solemn message, 'Be ye also ready.' May God help us! But I may speak for you and for myself, when I express our tenderest sympathy with the sorrowing family, and commend them now and evermore to the gracious care of their father's God. No! they are not left desolate, for 'the Lord Jehovah is their strength; He also will become their song and their consolation.' And you who have enjoyed the ministrations of our much-beloved and departed friend, let me counsel you, in a word, to remember your solemn position. We know how you loved him. His voice you will hear no more; his labours for you are all done. But he, 'being dead, yet speaketh.' And, oh! it may be said never so solemnly as now, that we are about to commit his mortal remains to the tomb. He is amongst the 'great cloud of witnesses' which compasseth us about—witnesses who, by 'faith and patience, now inherit the promises.' 'Therefore run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus.' Take heed, oh, take heed, you who have possessed this faithful, earnest, truthful, tender ministry, and let it not be that of any of you he must at last give in his account with grief. Be all of you 'his crown of rejoicing in that day.' And now my brief duty is over. We proceed to the grave in hope as well as in sorrow. If we weep, as well we may, let the light of gospel confidence and gospel comfort shine through our tears. 'We sorrow not as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.' With this glorious confidence we leave these mortal remains in the repose of the grave, until the resurrection morning. The Lord Jesus Himself will care for them; and that body shall rise again—' the body that shall be'—'fashioned like to his own glorious body,' according to the power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. Amen and amen."

The service having been brought to a close by singing and the benediction, the corpse was borne from the chapel, and the mournful procession formed, which was to attend its progress to its last resting place. In addition to his family, ministerial brethren, and intimate friends, the Committees of the Mechanics' Institute, Naval and Military Free Schools, and the Young Men's Christian Association; the Worshipful the Mayor (R. J. Laity, Esq.); members of his own congregation, and a large multitude from other places of worship, testified their respect by joining the procession; and this notwithstanding the incessant and heavy rain.

The ceremonial at the grave, owing to the unfavourable weather, was very brief, and consisted mainly of prayer, offered by the Rev. Thomas Horton (Baptist), who also preached the funeral sermon at Wycliffe Chapel, on the following Friday evening, from Matt. xxiv. 42, 43. The chapel was crowded on the occasion, and numbers were unable to gain admission.

A beautiful mural tablet, architecturally designed to correspond with the building, which is plain Gothic, has been provided by the bereaved church and congregation, bearing the following inscription, drawn up by the Rev. J. M. Charlton, M.A., President of the Western College :—

"In remembrance of the Rev. John Pyer, who was for nearly half a century a faithful servant of Christ, in the ministry of the gospel, and, for the last twenty years of his life, the devoted pastor of the church assembling in this place. He was a man of vigorous intellect, extensive knowledge, and stern integrity. He was strong in faith. In the discharge of duty his moral courage was undaunted; to the needy his charity was generous and self-denying. As a minister of Christ he was eminently successful, both in the conversion of souls, and in raising up other preachers of the gospel; and his unimpaired vigour of body and mind gave the promise of future years of usefulness. But, alas! he was called suddenly away in the midst of his labours, to his final and glorious reward, on the 7th of April, 1859, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. His sorrowing friends record on this tablet their profound admiration of his rare and various excellence; but future generations will behold in this sanctuary, which he was instrumental in building, a noble memorial of his extraordinary energy, wisdom, and perseverance.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.—Rev. xiv. 13."

SECTION II.

We have thus endeavoured to place a memorial wreath of affection, upon the tomb of a "beloved minister at rest in Christ," allowing him, as far as possible, to speak for himself, in language that needs neither interpretation nor eulogy. Over scenes herein depicted with so much faithfulness and simplicity, by his own pen, memory loves to linger, as, with the strengthened faith and fortitude of passing years, she can now more fully realize the poet's hallowed sentiments—

"I bless Thee for the quiet rest, thy servant resteth now,
I bless Thee for his blessedness, and for his crowned brow;
For every weary step he trod in faithful following Thee,
And for the good fight foughten well, and closed right valiantly."

It has been avowedly a somewhat difficult task, for the recording pen of one left for many years his sole companion, to accomplish; but, we doubt not, the warm admiration the subject of our sketch so largely won from a wide circle of friends, will secure indulgence for the imperfect manner of its execution. In attempting a summary of the more prominent features of his character, we will endeavour to be impartial, though distrustful of our power to convey an adequate idea of his many excellencies. Our failure in this respect will be most effectively supplied by the supplementary chapter, in which some of the most gifted ministers of the land bore testimony to his worth, while giving expression to their sympathy with the bereaved.

The deficiencies of his early education, were to a great extent counterbalanced by close and judicious reading and general observation. His commonplace books were numerous, while their titles—"Gleanings," "Thoughts," "Extracts," etc.—indicate how carefully, through the whole progress of his life, he had husbanded his gleanings of knowledge. The neatness of his account-books, his text and sermon, and various Biblical reference-books, are also proofs of the order and methodical arrangement which he loved to cultivate. Month by month his accounts were regularly balanced; and it is a little remarkable that his invariable custom had been duly observed on the 31st of March, just seven days before his death; so that, although that event happened so suddenly, and when he had considerable sums in his possession, belonging to the chapel and the Ministers' Provident Society, yet no difficulty was found in settling the whole in the most correct and satisfactory manner. His devotional habits were very marked. No Sabbath or week night service was entered upon, without some moments of previous earnest prayer, in the privacy of his study; while the manner in which he frequently urged upon his people the duty of private devotion, advising them "not to use too many words, but to pause occasionally between offering up their petitions at a throne of grace," indicated his own familiarity with, and enjoyment of, the exercise.

Of his perseverance, zeal, and activity, we have proof sufficient in the foregoing pages. The only indications of relaxation are found in occasional jottings, such as the following, and then invariably after a Sabbath of more than ordinary labour:—"Greatly fatigued with yesterday's exertions; reading and lounging most of the day." "Too idle to-day." "Read and lounged." "Cold still stubborn; headache and languor all day; yet managed to read a little in 'Young's Christ of History'—an interesting book."

He greatly enjoyed occasional rambles in the beautiful neighbourhood of his dwelling, considering such excursions at once healthful and invigorating; while to his associates and friends upon such occasions, his hilarity and genial society lent an additional charm, which many years of separation will never totally obliterate. Who, for instance, among his recently bereaved flock, will ever forget his enthusiasm when sailing up our beautiful river Tamar, and ascending the far-famed Morwell Rocks, he stood and gazed with admiration upon the magnificent prospect before him, and then led the singing of that well-known hymn, "There is a land of pure delight," etc. Ah! some of us have visited the spot since, and, with faltering tongues and tear-suffused eyes, attempted a repetition of that melting strain, while his blessed spirit was realizing all the fulness of the beatific vision.

His hospitality was of no mean order. Though circumstances and inclination alike forbade his giving sumptuous entertainments, yet his house and table were ever ready to welcome a friend or ministerial brother, and nothing seemed to delight him more than the society of a few congenial spirits. On one occasion, Dr. Raphael, an eminent Jewish

Rabbi, who had been lecturing on Hebrew Poetry at the Mechanics' Institute, was our guest, and greatly interested us by his affability and readiness to converse on their national peculiarities. Another Birmingham celebrity was also a frequent visitor, when his engagements as a lecturer brought him into the town. Though differing, perhaps, in some essential points of Christian faith, their sympathies on many subjects, especially those of a political nature, ran in the same channel, and our friend's visits were always anticipated with pleasure. We need hardly remark upon the *fidelity* of his friendships; to this the succeeding chapter will more forcibly testify than any words of our own. His sympathy and tenderness with the suffering and sorrowful, which his own heavy affliction had enabled him most fully to appreciate, was very obvious. No tale of sorrow ever fell listlessly on his ear, or elicited only commonplace expressions of sympathy and condolence. His heart and hand were ever ready to soothe the mourner, and relieve the necessitous. In more than one instance, young people from his school and congregation, were assisted in their emigration to Australia from his scanty purse; and the dying bed of more than one ministerial brother, has been freed from anxiety, by his promised care for the widow and orphans, which promise was faithfully redeemed by active exertions on their behalf. An effort of this kind resulted in the formation of the "South Devon Provident Society," for aged and infirm ministers, for which he was treasurer up to the time of his death.

He naturally possessed great strength of mind, otherwise he would have sunk under, rather than risen above, his life-long affliction. On this heavy and mysterious trial we have said but little. It was too painful to dwell upon, yet our portraiture would be incomplete without some brief reference to it. At certain stages of his earthly progress it pressed more heavily upon him than at others, as the revelation of his private papers indicate; but the Divine promise, "As thy day is, thy strength shall be," was wonderfully fulfilled in his experience; yet why the trial was so mysteriously prolonged, it remains for eternity to explain. That it had no small influence in moulding his habits, and tinging some phases of his character, there can be no question; and since maturer years have come upon us, we have more thoroughly understood, and could make allowances for, what appeared, as he himself says, "anomalous in his character." To a large extent, this may account for that *reserve* in his manner, which strangers, unacquainted with the circumstances and trials of his lot, frequently misconstrued, imagining it enough to *repel* rather than *attract*, especially amongst the young. But what are the facts of the case? Why the younger members of his flock were among the most sincere and disconsolate of all his mourners, feeling, as many of them expressed, with broken-hearted sobs and tears, that they "themselves had lost a *father*—a loss that would never be fully repaired." Oh! yes, beneath that outward mask of sternness, lay a depth of tenderness "the world knew nothing of."

A very characteristic anecdote, the point of which all who knew the subject of our sketch, will recognize as borrowed from his own experience, was told us a few years ago by one of his oldest and most valued friends. Upon one occasion, in their early manhood, this friend being much depressed in spirits from some untoward circumstances in his lot, went with a heavy heart and unbosomed his sorrow to Mr. Pyer, who, with that energy so natural to him, clapped him on the shoulder, and exclaimed, "Work, man, work; that's the best cure!" And, said his friend, "never have—never shall I forget his words."

Mr. Pyer's natural temper was quick and passionate; but Divine grace had wonderfully regulated its pulsations, so that they were seldom excited, and scarcely perceptible of late years. The wonder is, that severed so long and hopelessly from the softening influence of a happy wedded life, he had not been completely soured, or broken down in bitterness of soul; but the grace of God was magnified in him. Patiently and bravely did he endure this long fight of affliction.

Though Mr. Pyer made no pretension to be a poet, he occasionally indulged in giving metrical expression to his thoughts and feelings. We subjoin two specimens—the first inserted in a Bible presented to his daughter K. on one of her birthdays; the second addressed to a young friend on leaving England for Tasmania:—

"Throughout this sacred book behold,
Unfolded to your view,
The Father's love—the Saviour's grace—
The Spirit's favour, too.

"See faith and hope, pardon and peace,
With meekness, love, and truth;
Here crown the head of virtuous age.
And *there* adorn its youth.

"Here mark the end of Christian deeds,
And there behold their rise;
Their seat the heart, their sphere the earth,
Their fruit beyond the skies.

"Then take this best—this precious gift,
Which God to man has given,
And read, and think, and pray for grace
To find the path to heaven."

TO S. L. J.

"Go, dear girl, where duty calls thee,
Go and cross the mighty deep;
Go and trust, whate'er befall thee,
Him, whose eyelids never sleep.

"Once o'er Galilee's blue waters,
Firm He trod th' unyielding wave;
Now He comforts Zion's daughters,
Near to help, and strong to save.

"What though winds and waves assail thee,
Dread not, fear not, He is there;
What though dearest friends may wail thee,
He is with thee everywhere.

"Lean with confidence unbroken,
On his sure and promised grace;
Christians have the endearing token
Of his love in every place.

"Then as now, on land or ocean,
Sweet his presence—sure his care;
This will calm each high emotion;
This will banish every fear.

"See, then, in thy voyage an emblem
Of life's pilgrimage below;
Hang on Christ with fear and trembling,
Then through death to Jesus go."

On matters of religious faith, conscience, and conviction, Mr. Pyer had strong and decided views, and on suitable occasions never failed to declare and uphold them, and that with a fearlessness which vindicates the truth, couched in a memorandum found amongst his papers, and which strikingly exemplifies his own experience—"A public man with decided views, uncompromising honesty, and energetic zeal, however careful and conciliatory in disposition, is sure to make enemies." But the bitterest of his opponents, political or religious, ever gave him credit for integrity of heart, and a stern regard to conscientious views, however they might deprecate the forcible and vehement manner of their enunciation. The love of *freedom* seemed to have been burnt into his very soul. Hence the vigorous assaults he made on certain occasions, upon instances of civil, political, or religious thraldom. *Truthfulness* was another element in his character. At times, perhaps too outspoken to be in some quarters agreeable; his vindication being of this order—"What is the use to go round about a thing? You may as well call things by their right names—a spade's a spade," etc. But such plain dealing is sure to give offence; and he, in common with others of kindred sentiment and spirit, had occasionally to suffer in this respect for his temerity and frankness.

Everything approaching to *meanness*, *littleness* of soul, *oppression*, or *wrong*, at once excited his indignation, so foreign were such sentiments to his own generous and disinterested nature; and if at times (as we have already hinted) he had rather a dogmatic method of stating and defending his own principles and course of action, it arose more from his high independence of spirit and dignity of soul, than from any desire to dominate over another's faith. If considered blemishes, they are but as a spot on the sun's surface, when compared with the brilliancy of his noonday splendour.

But in addition to our own impression of his noble character, we have the testimony of public journalists, who, while lamenting his unlooked-for removal from the busy stage of life, gave utterance to the following truthful sentiments respecting him :—

"Mr. Pyer took an active part in the affairs of the town, believing that a man was not absolved from the duties of a citizen, because he was a minister of religion. An advanced Liberal, he consistently advocated those political opinions to which he was himself attached, and which he believed to involve the welfare of his country. As an earnest supporter of the cause of popular education, he took great interest in the Devonport Mechanics' Institute, and all movements which sought to elevate the intellectual standard of the humbler classes. He was on several occasions, elected to offices in connection with the above-named institution, and was, at the time of his death, one of its vice-presidents.

"Mr. Pyer's public life was marked by unwavering integrity, and an earnest, straightforward, uncompromising, manly bearing, that won for him the respect of those who most differed from him. One who held opposite opinions might believe the reverend gentleman to be wrong, but could never doubt his sincerity; and his talents were such as to render him feared as an opponent, and highly esteemed as an ally. By the greater number of those who knew him he was rather respected than loved; but it was reserved for his own congregation, and those who were acquainted with him intimately, to know that beneath a somewhat stern, abrupt, and rugged manner, there lay a noble heart, full of kindness and affection, and a childlike simplicity of feeling that could be moved to tears. Those who saw but the outer man respected him; those who knew his inner nature loved him; and the better he was known. the more he was loved."—*Devonport Telegraph.*

Another paper says:—

"Mr. Pyer, in politics, was a staunch Liberal. Energetic in his character, and warm in all his sympathies, he abhorred any petty expediencies and mean surrenders of principle. He looked upon political as upon moral life, as ever involving a duty, and requiring plain distinctiveness of expression and action. Having long and anxiously reasoned out his principles to legitimate and logical conclusions, he was always strong and positive in opinion, and his manner, which sometimes approached to dogmatism, was occasionally objected to by those who differed from him; but in heart, sentiment, and feeling, he was, nevertheless, just, considerate, and charitable. He was a fine specimen of the old Puritan in steadfastness and consistency, but with his principles and affections enlarged and elevated by the historical facts and the more favourable experiences of later times."

An air of authoritative power seemed blended with his every action; but it was one which won a willing and hearty obedience, not a servile service, from his associates in labour. As an illustration on this point, we are reminded of a little incident related to us by a friend a few years ago, one of his early converts in Manchester. He was at the time a youth in our Sabbath school, and had been required by his pastor to commit to memory rather a long piece of poetry against a certain day, for one of our recitations. He demurred to the request, fearing he should not have sufficient time. "But, David, it *must* be done," was the reply; and, said my friend, "learnt it was; for I felt I dared not rebel."

The same individual told me that, some years after we had left Manchester, and certain disputes disturbed their church harmony, he used to point to Mr. Pyer's portrait, and say, "That's the man you want among you. *He* would soon set all to rights;" and, continued he, "We always felt his word was *law;* there was no resisting it." Another circumstance he related bearing upon the same particular. Upon one occasion our large Sabbath school, numbering then about 800, was taken for a treat through the pleasure-grounds of a gentleman interested in the cause at Canal Street—Mr. T. Harbottle. Before going, the children were warned by their Pastor against injuring the property, gathering flowers, etc. "It was quite enough," said my friend; "not a blade of grass was touched."

We well know how, in more recent times, when sharing his labours connected with the erection of Wycliffe Chapel, his young friends would sometimes smile and shrug their shoulders at work appointed them to be done; but who ever thought of drawing back? It was the compulsion of love, linked with a warm esteem for the noble leader whom they followed, that led them, with ready heart and willing hand, to obey his behests.

Returning to some of the gentler attributes of his nature, we may refer to his tenderness of conscience, evinced in several passages in his diary. We cite one or two instances:—

"Had occasion to reprove my dear children this evening for a species of negligence, but fear I was too harsh. Poor dear C. went to bed weeping. Pardon my transgressions, blessed Lord, and make me more careful in the future."

Returning from an evening spent at the house of a friend in Manchester, he says:—

"I am far from being comfortable in mind, for I have grieved the spirit of the Lord. The evening passed pleasantly enough; but in conversation and argument I was guilty of exaggerating some circumstances; and I fear, upon the whole, was at one time too tenacious, and at another too trifling. Alas! how apt am I to turn aside and to forget, when in cheerful company, the gravity and propriety which should always be observed and maintained by a minister of Christ. Lord, heal me, for my soul is sore vexed."

It is but justice to add, that this occurrence took place in the early stage of his ministry, in the year 1827. Again, November 17, 1831, when visiting a family belonging to the Church of England, who resided in his wife's native village, he writes:—

"Passed a pleasant evening with the J.'s, an interesting family. Talked of religion, politics, ecclesiastical affairs, family and village news, etc., and so brought on, before I was aware, the midnight hour. What a treat to me is intelligent conversation; yet in this 'pot of ointment' I found on reflection 'a dead fly.' I left without prayer, or even proposing it. My conscience upbraids me. Pardon me, O Lord!"

We must not omit to mention his extreme generosity; for extreme it was, when viewed in connection with his very limited means—his salary only in two instances (London and Cork) ever exceeding £150 per annum, and at some periods of his ministry often falling below that sum. Yet had he learned most effectually to honour that inspired precept, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The liberality urged upon the people of his charge ever found in him an example worthy of imitation; and we have been surprised to discover, from his private memoranda, how largely he contributed to the cause of God in various ways. His reliance upon Divine providence was singularly childlike and impressive, and in some periods of his history had been severely tested. A short time before his death, a young friend, interested in "Life Assurances," suggested to him the propriety of insuring his life as a provision for the future. "Oh!" said he, with that buoyancy and trustfulness so remarkable in him, "let us get rid of the chapel debt first. Providence has always taken care of me and mine, and I'm not afraid to trust Him now."

We have reserved to the last our estimate of his abilities and characteristics as a *preacher*, at the same time feeling our incompetency to pronounce judgment. Our dilemma, however, is much relieved by the recognition of a passage in the Rev. J. Graham's funeral sermon for Dr. Leifchild, which is strikingly applicable to the honoured subject of our memoir. Indeed, so pertinent are the remarks, that it might have been written with only him in view, and we cannot withhold the quotation. Mr. Graham says:—

"We cannot but be grateful that he commenced his Christian life among the Methodists. Among them he learnt the free, fervid utterance so characteristic of Methodism; among them he cultivated that Christian experience, that assurance of faith, that working piety, that direct appeal to heart and conscience, that direct effort for conversion of souls, which afterwards were such elements of his ministerial power. We do not say he would not have had them in some degree, in whatever section of the Christian Church he had been connected; but undoubtedly the Methodism of seventy years ago was an admirable school for their culture."

Now, we feel sure, no one who has carefully followed us thus far, but must recognize in the above citation, a remarkable correspondence in the early experience and more mature action, of these venerated and beloved ministers of the gospel. In Mr. Pyer's case, the qualities here depicted were so prominent, as to be frequently matters of observation and comment. His style was vigorous and terse, rather than ornamental; his language plain and simple. His sermons were very varied, experimental, and practical, touching but sparingly upon doctrinal points; while his earnestness and energy, aided by a powerful voice, carried weight in their delivery. His fine manly form and penetrating eye, had something to do likewise with the impressions produced upon his audience. But these are minor considerations beside those powerful appeals, pathetic pleadings, and faithful exhibitions of Divine truth, which have shaken so many hearts in their false security, and built up believers on their "most holy faith." How many such will be his "crown of rejoicing" in the last great day no tongue can tell, neither how many have already welcomed his emancipated spirit into the mansions of our Father's house. To us is left the memory and example of his holy and useful life—

"And vivid long in the faithful breast,
Will the gleam of remembrance play,
As the lingering light in the crimson west,
When the sunbeams have died away."

We may supplement our own remarks upon Mr. Pyer's official character by a second quotation from a journal already cited:—

"As a Christian minister, Mr. Pyer was a true leader, guide, and friend. He possessed great power in the pulpit; his language, though sometimes diffuse, was always plain, emphatic, natural — the eloquence of an earnest man, uttering solemn convictions of the heart, and dealing on the most momentous subjects that can engage the attention of mankind."

Our task is done. However imperfectly we have accomplished the work affection and the intercession of friends prompted us to undertake, we trust the example of so earnest, devoted, and, we may add, holy a life, will stimulate our readers to follow him as he followed Christ; and when the summons shall come for our departure, may we be equally prepared to exult—

"For ever with the Lord!
Amen. So let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word:
'Tis immortality!

. . . . .

"Knowing as I am known,
How shall I love that word!
And oft repeat before the throne,
For ever with the Lord."

We quote the following brief sketch from the pen of the Rev. Eliezer Jones, now of Ipswich, formerly of Norley Chapel, Plymouth:—

"My lamented friend, Mr. Pyer, was true to the core. Mere conventionalisms and forms he abhorred, and all affectation. His own convictions on important subjects were so clear and strong, that he bore with impatience any indecision or indifference, and resented, perhaps too keenly, everything like trimming and compromise. As a friend, he was faithful and firm to the last degree. Never did he betray or disappoint the confidence that was reposed in him. He was the soul of honour. Nor was his friendship in name merely; it was active and energetic whenever occasion demanded. He would rise at midnight to serve one in need; and many are they who can witness how unweariedly he toiled, and used every influence he could command in order to benefit them. He threw his heart into their cause.

"I lived in close intimacy with him for twelve years, and, one way or other, saw him two or three times a week, and I can say with literal truth that a cross word or look never passed between us. If he committed some mistake, or formed a wrong judgment, his generous nature would instantly acknowledge it as soon as it was pointed out. He was a man much misunderstood by outsiders; but there was no misgiving as to his genial disposition on the part of those who knew him. The outer crust once broken, you found beneath a welling fount of affectionate emotion—ay, a gushing tenderness, like to that of woman. It was good to hear his very laugh, so healthy and genuine was its ring. How well he could relate an anecdote, and what a fund he had in store, gathered up in the course of his varied life. He was, at the time I allude to, the centre and life of as cordial and united a fraternity of ministers in the 'Three Towns' as, I do believe, ever existed on earth. Alas! how scattered now, though still retaining, as many as survive, loving recollections of that sunny season.

"Nothing used to astonish me more than the buoyancy and cheerfulness of his spirit, especially when I remembered the trials of various sorts through which he was called to pass, and, in particular, that life-sorrow which he had to carry. Nevertheless, his countenance beamed with pleasantness, and his eye was ever ready for the glance of gentle sportiveness. Accordingly, he was a wonderful favourite with the young; he entered into their mirth as one of themselves. A boy's heart was in his breast. My own children were always delighted when he came to our house. They would shout as they saw him approach, 'Here's Mr. Pyer; now for a bit of fun.' And fun indeed it was—such games, and gambols, and such glee; all capering about him—one climbing on his back, another clinging to his legs, and the wee thing of two years old drawn on his knee, charmed with a song or a story, and clapping its hands in ecstasy. After this merriment for fifteen or twenty minutes, he would come into my study and sit down to chat, with the gravity and unction of a man who lived very near to God. We met usually on the Monday, and the topics of discourse on the previous day would be sure to come up. How often has he uttered, with a sigh and a starting tear, 'Oh! that I could preach so as to save souls!' This was really his grand passion.

"The only pain he occasioned me was from his deferential manner, as if I had been his superior in any respect. He would listen with an interest and an air so applauding as to distress me. Dear fellow! no one ever cheered or encouraged me more. With him I could think aloud. I had his heart, and he knew that he had mine. For a long time he insisted that I ought to write Dr. Payne's memoirs;* I have been glad ever since that I was not venturesome enough to take the work out of hands so much more competent. As the manuscript proceeded, he read to me every word, entreating the sharpest criticism. Not a remark was offered that he did not receive with the utmost readiness and candour.

"We travelled a good deal together to Association meetings, Ordination and Anniversary services, and the like, and thus I had opportunities of hearing him preach at various times. Frequently I have heard him speak with great power; it was a raking fire directed at the sinner's conscience, followed by earnest wooings of the soul to Christ. On the platform, too, he could show mastery, especially if he had to plead for *liberty*—whether for the slave abroad, for the masses at home, or for the victim of oppression anywhere; and above all, if an opponent did but start up to advocate tyranny in any of its modifications, then his artillery would get into full play, and the adversary was sure either to slink away, or to lie crushed at his feet. His lectures at Mechanics' Institutes, and similar places, several of which I heard, were admirable in composition and delivery, and always pointed with appropriate moral and religious teaching.

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* Prefixed to "Lectures on Christian Theology," by the late Rev. George Payne, LL.D.

"On all these accounts I loved him. His death has made a blank in my list of friends which I do not expect to fill up. I anticipate, however, that among the company of the redeemed, *he* will be one of the earliest to welcome me into heaven, and to instruct me in the nature of heaven's engagements."

APPENDIX.

In Memoriam.

"The memory of the just is blessed."

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."—SOLOMON.

FROM various Associations with which Mr. Pyer was officially connected at the time of his death, resolutions of sympathy and condolence were received by the bereaved family. Expressive of their esteem, and the estimate formed of his labours, by those who could so well judge of his abilities and service, they are very valuable, and as such, are appended to his memoirs.

From the South Devon Association of Congregational Ministers:—

"Moved by the Rev. A. HAMPSON, seconded by the Rev. J. CHATER, supported by the Rev. J. ALLEN, and carried unanimously—

"That this Association, convened in Annual Assembly, desires to record with feelings of devout and reverent humility the providence of God, who has within the last few days, and in a solemn and unlooked-for manner, called to Himself, from his labours to his reward, their esteemed and devoted brother, the Rev. John Pyer.

"In thus giving expression to their deep sense of the loss they have sustained, they would also record with gratitude to Almighty God, their acknowledgments for the devoted services their departed brother was enabled to render for many years to this Association; during several of which years he most efficiently sustained the office of its secretary; and by his wisdom, and his earnest, untiring effort, was permitted largely to advance the interests of Christ's kingdom in South Devon.

"While reverently acknowledging the righteous wisdom of Him who appoints the lot of his servants, and holds their times in his hands, in the event which they are now called to mourn, this Association would humbly pray that He may be pleased to sanctify this affecting dispensation to the quickening of all his ministers, in life, and holiness, and spiritual power; and would also beg in the expression of their affectionate sympathy, to commend the members of the bereaved and sorrowing church and family to his gracious and promised care.

"Signed on behalf of the meeting,

"WM. MAJOR PAULL, Secretary.

"TOTNES, *April* 20, 1859."

"5, KEPPEL TERRACE, STOKE, DEVONPORT,
"*April* 11, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—I am sure you will be cheered by receiving a copy of the resolutions, which were unanimously adopted by the Devonport Union for prayer, at its last meeting. It will somewhat lessen the anguish which you feel in your irreparable loss, to know how high your venerable sire stood in the estimation of his Christian brethren. To me he was a true friend. He received me somewhat *cautiously* at first, as was natural; but after we had got thoroughly to understand each other, our friendship became close, and our intercourse was marked by a manly and Christian frankness. From him I never received anything but kindness, and deeply do I feel the melancholy providence which has so soon deprived me of his friendship on earth. But it is our mercy to know that we shall renew our intercourse with the dear departed one, in brighter and more perfect scenes above. Thanks be to God for this hope!"

"PRINCESS STREET, *Friday, April* 8, 1859.

"In consequence of the sudden death of the Rev. John Pyer, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted—viz.:—

"I. RESOLVED,—That as the various churches of the Saviour in this town are now happily united in prayer and effort, and as we are commanded by the highest authority to 'weep with those that weep,' we hereby express our very deep sympathy with the church assembling in Wycliffe Chapel, in the great loss which they have sustained by the recent death of our beloved Brother Pyer.

"We desire to convey to them an expression of our great veneration for the character of their now sainted pastor, and our earnest desire that the impressive circumstances of his death, may give an additional power to the instructions which they so long received from his lips.

"'He being dead yet speaketh;' and our prayer is, that the church meeting in Wycliffe Chapel, and all the other churches in the town, may ever follow him in his fervent love for Christ, in the spotless purity of his life, in the self-denying devotedness of his labours, and in his fervent desires for the union of all who 'love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.'

"II. RESOLVED,—That a copy of the foregoing resolutions be forwarded by the secretary to the church and family of Mr. Pyer.

"I feel a melancholy pleasure, my dear friend, in complying with the direction contained in this second resolution; and am, with many prayers for your present and eternal happiness,

"Yours in Christ Jesus,
"JOHN STOCK, Secretary."

MISS PYER.

"STOKE, *April* 13, 1859.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,—At the meeting of the Committee of the Royal Naval and Military Free Schools, held this morning, a full Committee being present, the resolution which follows was carried, with every feeling of true respect and sympathy. I was directed to forward a copy of it to you.

"Moved by Rev. A. Hampson, seconded by Captain Somerville, R.N. :—

"That this Committee desires to record their deep sense of loss, in the lamented decease of their esteemed friend and colleague, the Rev. John Pyer.

"Connected with the Naval and Military Free Schools from an early period of their history, and for many years an active and useful member of their Managing Committee, he was ever found the steady supporter, and the firm interpreter of the enlightened and liberal principles, on which the education supplied within these walls are based. The wisdom of his counsel, the practical sagacity of his suggestions, and the simple purpose of his action, which ever sought the welfare of this institution, were such as will cause his loss to be long felt, and much deplored.

"This Committee would beg respectfully to offer the expression of their sympathy with the bereaved family, on this mournful occasion.

"With kind regards, I am,
"My dear friends, yours very truly,
"Aspinall Hampson.

"To Mr. and Miss Pyer."

"Young Men's Christian Association, Temperance Hall, Devonport, *April* 16, 1859.

"Madam,—The Committee of the above institution desire me to transmit to you the following resolution, which was passed at their last meeting—

"Resolved,—That this Committee desire to record their deepest sorrow in the sudden death of one of their vice-presidents, the Rev. J. Pyer. His long and devoted attachment to this institution, his readiness at all times to give his valuable assistance; his labours in Bible-classes and Lectures, from the establishment of the institution, and his efforts for the best interests of young men, render his loss deeply to be lamented; and this Committee beg most respectfully, to express to Miss Pyer their deepest sympathy with her under her trial, and pray that the Great Head of the Church may support and strengthen her in her sorrow and affliction.

"T. S. GAUD, Secretary."

A kind and appropriate letter was forwarded from the Wycliffe church, affirming that "the sudden departure of their beloved Pastor had indeed cast a gloom over the whole church, and that his memory would be long cherished by every member," etc., etc.; but the communication is too lengthy, and in some respects too personal to be given entire.

From the teachers of the Sabbath school, the following resolution was received:—

"RESOLVED,—That the Sabbath school desires to record the great loss it has sustained in the sudden death of its beloved President, the Rev. John Pyer. He took a deep interest in all its affairs, was ever ready to render all the assistance in his power, both by his presence and contributions, and rejoiced at any indications of the favour of God visible in their midst. Though the school will be deprived of the benefit of his counsels in its future operations, yet his words of advice and admonition to the teachers at their meetings, and his instructive addresses to the children, will be long remembered; and the Committee pray God that his past counsels may be abundantly blessed to the good of all connected with the school, so that 'though dead, he may yet speak.'

"J. S. CUDLIP, Secretary.

"Teachers' Meeting, *May* 11, 1859."

That noble room, in which a portion of his last Sabbath afternoon on earth was passed, has also its memorial stone, in the form of a neat mural tablet, erected by the teachers and scholars, and bearing the following inscription:—

"This tablet is erected in memory of the late Rev. John Pyer, by the scholars of this Sabbath school, as a token of their affectionate esteem for him as their Pastor. His honourable and useful life closed April 7th, 1859."

We also select, from amongst a mass of letters sent to his daughter on the occasion of her beloved father's death, a few which bear most prominent testimony to his *worth*, while we take the opportunity of reiterating her sense of obligation and gratitude to the valued writers, whose admiration of the deceased, and sympathy with the sorrowing, were a rich source of consolation in the hour of sorest need. We place the letters as nearly as possible in the order of their reception:—

"36, EATON PLACE, *April* 8, 1859.

"DEAR MISS PYER,—It has been with most sincere regret that I have heard this morning of your sad bereavement. It is impossible I know, on an occasion like this, to offer any real consolation; but it is a satisfaction to myself to offer you the expression of my sympathy, and when the first shock is over, it may not be ungratifying to know how much the friends of your late father feel for you. As I shall visit Devonport in the course of next week, I shall do myself the pleasure of paying you my personal respects.

"I am, dear Miss Pyer, yours faithfully,
"E. PERRY."*

"PENZANCE, *April* 9, 1859.

"MY POOR AFFLICTED FRIEND,—What am I to say to you in this dreary hour? My heart is stricken, my thoughts are confused, my pen is paralyzed. My noble and revered old friend Pyer no more! I can scarcely write the strange words. And yet they must be written, and to many they will be very bitter, as well as very strange. God knows how bitter they are to me!

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* Sir Erskine Perry was at this time Member, with Mr. James Wilson, for Devonport, both of whom paid us a kind visit of condolenco.

"What a poor, dumb thing is friendship at a time like this! I love you very much, but I can do nothing for you. No; you must conquer this heavy grief in God's strength alone. None but Christ must come between you and the dead. All else are weak intruders; but *He avails.* And yet I want to see you, and feel as if I ought to see you. Not that I think any sympathy of mine can do you any good; but my heart yearns for you. I feel I ought to come, and if I can possibly arrange my affairs, I will certainly come on Monday. Perhaps I may be in time to follow my revered old friend to his grave. Oh! it is very sad, very bitter. I cannot write more; but pray God bless you!

"J. P. B."

In a letter a month later, the above writer says, during a visit to his paternal home:—

"Father and I were continually talking about poor Mr. Pyer. There was a melancholy fascination to me about my father's reminiscences of him. There are not many men of this generation to die so truly noble as he whom you mourn. God grant that there may be many more!"

"IPSWICH, *April* 9, 1859

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—Your sad, sad communication, received this afternoon, has smitten my heart. I can well conceive what *you* must feel by my own emotions. I feel as if a great blank was left in the world. I shall see my friend no more here; no more hold pleasant intercourse with him; ask his counsel; pour out my heart into his; enjoy his hearty, guileless, ringing laugh. Gone—and so suddenly, and soon! I counted on seeing him often; I even looked forward to meeting him next month, probably in London, and thought to write him in a few days, to inquire if it should be so. But no; I must look up far away from earth now to realize his existence, Oh! it is like a dream. It is impossible for me to regard it as anything real; yet how near is the eternal world to this! how short and (to a saint) easy the transition! It is but a step; and the spirit is at home before the throne of glory; to sit down and breathe away into life everlasting.

"Alas! that we should be so slow to conceive of the unseen world, though as real as, or rather infinitely more so, than this. Well, he is there; another attraction heavenwards—another string loosened to bind to earth. God grant that this event, and others of the kind, may be truly sanctified to me!

"I could say much as to my views of your beloved father's character; but in truth my heart is so sore and bruised that I have no power to write or speak. I would fain be still, and simply think, wonder, and weep. And why should I even record a syllable to you, who knew him so well, and loved him truly for his manifold and striking excellencies? Like, as it was said of his Master, 'The world knew him not,' I regard it as one of the privileges of my life to have known him, and so known him as to love him exceedingly. But *you*, my dear friend, what a bereavement you sustain! I do indeed sympathize with you, and pray for you. May our glorious, undying, unchanging Father, with all the resources of his unfailing love and consolation, strengthen, uphold, and comfort you! He *will* be with you, and never fail you. May He take you into his own loving bosom.

"I have written very incoherently. Indeed I would have waited awhile before writing at all, but I could not bear to let a single post go without a word to assure you how much I sorrow with you, and yet *rejoice* in my dear friend's emancipation from all evil, and his easy, painless transition into the brightness and perfection of the beatific vision.

"Believe me, my dear Miss Pyer, yours very sincerely and affectionately,

"ELIEZER JONES.

"My wife mingles her tears with your own, and begs I will convey the assurance of her warmest love and deepest condolence. My children, too, mourn the departure of one they greatly loved, and were always delighted to see."

"SYDENHAM, *April* 9, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—I am just now in receipt of the mournful intelligence conveyed by Mr. C. It has taken me quite by surprise, as must the event have taken you.

"Although your beloved father lived much beyond the average term of ministerial existence, yet those who knew him intimately, have always been accustomed to speak of his great strength and buoyancy, as affording promise of active service in the church for years to come; but God is giving us, in his sudden removal, another evidence of the vanity of the most probable and certain calculations. At an hour we none of us thought, the Son of Man has come. For you remains the special comfort of the assurance, that He has come to summon his servant to a world where the light is so clear as to outshine all mystery, and where death is left behind, and nothing remains now but service without toil, enterprise without check, glory without a shade for ever and ever. And how little has he tasted of death after all, in the attainment of this result, compared with the humiliation to which the greater part of our race are subjected, whilst lingering amidst the sighs and conflicts of that dark domain! 'Absent from the body, present with the Lord.' In what a trice must all the accruing conditions of the two contrasted conditions have been made known to him. For myself I shall always cherish towards your father's memory the affection which was the sterling, true-hearted characteristic of his own friendship. I would gladly be with those who follow him to his grave; but though absent from that occasion, I will pray for you, that your heavenly Father may afford you all the needed interpositions of his grace and providence, and also for the church, that it may become baptized over the dead, with an influence which shall render it, in the noblest sense, prosperous for a long while hence.

"I am, dear Miss Pyer, yours most kindly,

"T. C. Hine.

"Mrs. Hine unites with me in the expression of kindest sympathy."

"Barnsbury, London, *April* 9, 1859.

"My dear suffering Sister,—I have nothing more to say to you, you do not already know. I was shocked and stunned by the note I received this morning. I know your warm and sympathetic nature must be crushed and broken beneath your great affliction. You have indeed lost your earthly all. Your close, deep relationship to your beloved parent will make you feel the desolation to be dreadful. I regret now *so much*, that for some time I have seemed unable to answer to his honoured request, on the occasion of my visits to Devonport; but I hope he understood. Certainly his memory will be dear to me—very, very dear—until I see him in light, if I may hope to attain to that resurrection. Never, never shall I forget some of our sacred, long, happy interviews, two or three years since. I have put up a monument to his memory in my soul. I admired, and envied, and coveted his *strength*—a great quality, sometimes in life an annoying one, but a kind of granite, to stand well the wear and tear of time and death. . . . .

"Believe me, my dear sister, in heartiest affection and deepest sympathy, "Edwin Paxton Hood."

We make room for the following extract from Mrs. Hood's note referring to him:—

"How much all who *knew* him must have admired and loved him! I shall never forget his kindness to me when I came a perfect stranger to your home, and spent a few days as his guest. I feel quite happy now, to think that when I left you, he kissed me and told me that 'I should come again.' . . . .

"Ever, my dear friend, most lovingly and in all sympathy, yours, "Lavinia P. Hood."

The next letter is from one of his early associates in Tent-preaching, and father to the friend at Penzance, now settled in Birmingham; both Baptist ministers. Its touching simplicity is very beautiful.

"BLABY, NEAR LEICESTER, *April* 12, 1859.

"MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND,—You are again very sadly bereaved. Accept my poor, but most sincere and very deep sympathy. God bless you, and be a father to you.

"I received the memorial of your noble, dear, and honoured father's demise this morning; but my son John had announced to me the sad, yet glorious fact, twenty-four hours earlier than the *card* which you sent me. At first I was shocked, and shed, with my dear wife, a trembling, bitter tear; but I rose up from my seat, walked round about our village for a while, and felt more calm, and much more happiness than I can express. In the evening I took for my text, Job v. 26, and read John's letter as an introduction to my sermon. The season was at once solemn and sweet. All my hearers knew your sainted father well, and then there were my wife, and one of my deacons, who felt that they owed to his ministry their spiritual life; the former of which commenced forty years ago, and the latter just eleven. Both have been progressing ever since; and both will go on to maturity, be gathered into the heavenly garner, and help to make up your father's joy and crown of rejoicing. I, too, owe him much, and hope to tell him all when we meet in our Father's house above.

"Your father is dead. No, no! His separation from us is not *death;* there is nothing like death in it. He is gone from you, gone from us all; gone from his hallowed labours; gone without telling us that he was going; without saying '*Fare ye well.*' But he is gone by *transition*, rather than by death. There is indeed a *dissolution;* the noble, sanctified spirit has fled, and that fine, tall, well-built, robust frame, which was full of majesty, especially in the pulpit, when he was before his people in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and his eye was brilliant and sparkling with the fire of heavenly love. I say that fine body, 'fearfully and wonderfully made,' has fallen, and you have laid it in the quiet tomb; but still John Pyer, your beloved parent, my dear and honoured friend, is not dead; he is only gone, and his departure was without bitterness, without pain, without 'cold sweats or rolling eyes.'

"Well do I remember talking with him many years ago about my own fears of death, when he lightly struck me with his hand on the side of my head, saying, 'What! can you trust the Saviour for time and eternity, and yet be afraid that He won't take care of you through the short passage from the one to the other? Supposing it may be painful, you cannot lessen the reality by suffering in the prospect; and how do you know, but the Saviour may come and *kiss* your soul away to heaven when you are asleep?' Often have I thought of the remarks, and more than twenty times since yesterday morning have I seemed to see his smiling countenance, and hear his soothing voice when he uttered them. How can I feel otherwise than happy as I think of him *now?* He departed from earth in the Lord; departed in holy quiet. Blessed is he. He rests from his labours; his works follow him. His spirit is made perfect. He is now in some heavenly mansion; congratulated by the general assembly and church of the firstborn, with whom he shall dwell while immortality endures. He preached once very sweetly about the 'hope of the inheritance that is incorruptible,' etc. He has now entered upon it, sees it as it is, is satisfied with it.

"'What says the happy saint?
He bids you bear your load;
With silent steps proceed,
And follow him to God;
Till life's uneasy dream
In rapture shall depart,
He bids you give, like him,
To Christ, your throbbing heart.'

"You will do so, I know; you have done it already long ago; you renewed your vow as you dropped your tears on his coffin. You have done well; and it shall be well with you. You are bereaved, but not of your *all.* There is a voice which speaks to you, and says, 'Fear not. I am with thee, I am God *all-sufficient.* Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy day is, so shall thy strength be.' Let this be enough. Trust, and be not afraid. You shall safely weather out the remainder of life's tempestuous storm, and then rest with your now glorified sire in the happy, happy land where there is no more curse.

"That God may be very gracious to you, sustain, direct, guide, and comfort you, is the sincere prayer of your ever affectionate and deeply sympathizing friend,

" JOHN BARNETT."

"LONDON, *April* 12, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—I was indeed grieved by receiving the sad memento of your beloved father, my friend's departure from among us. Few notices have so affected me; and so it has been with our friend Mr. Snow. I took a melancholy interest in perusing the note sent to him, and should have been glad to have heard more full details of the sad bereavement. I mourn unfeignedly his removal, and regard it as a great loss, not to you alone, or even to his church and personal circle. He had a public spirit, loved liberty and truth, and feared not to maintain the right. He had by labour and integrity, by a clear head, and a warm heart, endeared himself; and his large and public spirit gave him a power to do good for the world as well as the church not possessed by many. Like myself, perhaps, he could not dissemble or prove a *sham* in the sentimental and flimsy pretensions of mankind; and his stern decisions against the slip-slop formalities and palpable hypocrisies of time-servers, militated against his popularity. But men who knew him valued his reality and enduring integrity and zeal. His Christian ministrations now finished, and I doubt not accepted by the heart-searching Master, were extensive; from his Tent services, thirty-five years ago, to the completion of Wycliffe Chapel; and during those years many have had to praise God for his faithful and evangelical labours. Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, and London will retain vestiges of his self-denying toil and diligent labours for coming years; but men of less worth will reap the present reward of his services. Eternity will unfold all his work.

"I write thus to you, that I may gratify my own predilections, not to tell you what is far better known to you than any other. I trust the truths he taught you and others will lead you to the exhaustless fountain of consolation; and that Divine grace will abound for your support.

"Believe me, dear Miss Pyer, faithfully yours,

"JAMES W. MASSIE."

"12, ADELAIDE ROAD NORTH, ST. JOHN'S WOOD,
"*April* 12, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—It was with no ordinary emotion that I read the mournful contents of the note you had kindly directed to be forwarded to us. I hasten to assure you of our sincere sympathy under this sudden and heavy stroke of bereavement. Those who knew Mr. Pyer from a distance only, could not fail to respect him for his many and great excellencies of character; but those of us who were permitted to enjoy intimacy with him, felt not only the highest respect, but the warmest affection. Personally I can never forget the great kindness he invariably showed to me, and the brotherly interest he ever took in all that concerned me. His removal has broken one of the links of connection with earth, and added one more to those which draw towards heaven.

"You, my dear Miss Pyer, God alone can comfort under this great sorrow. Your friends can only weep with you, and pray for you. May the God of all comfort, our wise and loving Father in heaven, strengthen and sustain you! May you hear his voice, and feel that it is his hand that is doing this! Mrs. N. unites with me most cordially in this expression of sympathy, and desires me to give her most affectionate love.

"Yours most sincerely,
"SAMUEL NEWTH."

"CHESHUNT COLLEGE, *April* 11, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—We are exceedingly grieved to hear of the sudden death of your dear father. We feel much for you under this very heavy and unexpected stroke. May you have all that support and consolation which God alone can give! Your dear father has been so active a man in connection with all the public institutions of the county, that his death will not only be felt by his congregation and personal friends, but by the public at large. May it be sanctified to us all! May we all be concerned to have our loins girded about, and our lamps burning, and so be like unto men who are waiting for our Lord.

"Your dear father has been spared the pains and weakness of a protracted illness. His active mind would have felt being laid aside, more than others of a less active turn, and God has seen fit to spare him such a trial of faith and patience. He has been called away suddenly; but to the Christian, sudden death is sudden glory. It seems, indeed, a severer stroke to surviving relatives. They do not feel prepared for it; but God can, and I trust He will, give you strength equal to your day. The parting is only for a little season—a very little—and we shall all have done with earth, and shall rejoin, in far happier circumstances, those Christian friends whom we loved here below.

"Mrs. Alliott sends her kindest love and warm sympathy. May the Lord stand by you, and strengthen you. With very kind regards, believe me,

"Yours most truly,
"R. ALLIOTT."

"NEWCASTLE, *April* 15, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—Mrs. Smith informs me, in a lettter received to-day, that an intimation had reached our home of the removal of your much-loved father; and I have just seen in a paper the notice of his sudden removal. Permit me to express to you my sincere sympathy with you in the deep sorrow into which you are plunged by this mysterious stroke of Divine providence, and to hope that you may be supported and comforted in this time of need. . . . . I judge, and am thankful for it, from the notice I saw in the 'Nonconformist,' that your father's mind seemed to have been meetening for the heavenly world, into which no doubt he has entered, through the merits of the Redeemer. A loud call is given to each of us to be ready, for in 'an hour we think not the Son of Man cometh.' May we all meet in the house of our Father above!

"I remain, with kind Christian regards, my dear Miss Pyer,

"Your affectionate friend,
"George Smith."

"10, Alfred Road, Paddington, *April* 15, 1859.

"My dear Friend,—Since Monday's post brought me the mournful tidings of your great sorrow, I have been with you in spirit, but I had not the heart to write. To leave you alone with God seemed best; for how poor and feeble is human consolation! I can better pray for you, and weep with you, than shape sentences of condolence; for there's no disputing, this is the very heaviest grief *to you* that could happen, and my heart bleeds for you. And really when one looks at the world, and sees the poor cumberers that are left to burden it, while the good, and true, and useful are removed, it is a great mystery. All we know is, God does not want our aid; all our faith is, 'He doeth all things well;' and it needs a strong, living faith to be able to say and feel that. In this hour of trial may the Everlasting arms be round about you—a shelter from the blast, a covert from the storm! I shall ever esteem it a privilege to have known your beloved and lamented father. His kindness and approbation, so frankly given where many hesitated, was an encouragement that cheered me in my work, and laid me under an obligation that I can never forget. My dear friend, I will write again shortly; meanwhile be assured of the deep sympathy of yours affectionately,

"CLARA LUCAS BALFOUR."

"BROOK HOUSE, NEAR BROMSGROVE, *April* 16, 1859.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot put away that newest-come black-edged card amongst my memorials of those I have known, who are 'absent from the body, present with the Lord,' without a word to you, expressive of my great respect for your father. I found him always superior to the narrow prejudices of those who suffer suspected heresy to break fellowship more than known sin. Firm he was; but catholic and tender too. Happily I need not to console you, for you hold with him and with me, the like precious faith in Him who is the resurrection and the life.

"Yours right truly,
"GEORGE DAWSON."

"TAUNTON, *April* 16, 1859.

"DEAR MISS PYER,—I cannot refrain from saying in few words, how truly and deeply I sympathize with you in the weighty sorrow which has fallen on yourself with greatest severity; but at the same time very heavily on all who had the advantage and pleasure of regarding your father as a friend. I shall not soon forget the kindness I always received from him, and I shall never cease to regret the loss of so much wisdom and energy, and so many sterling excellencies as he so eminently possessed. The shock of so sudden a removal has, I doubt not, heightened your distress. Let us, however, try to regard it only in its blessedness to himself. We can scarcely doubt that the change to him was almost painless; and to one so well prepared it was a mercy to be spared the pains and groans, and dying strife.

* * * * *

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,
"W. H. GRIFFITHS."

"NEWRY, *April* 18, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—It was with extreme regret I perceived in the 'Patriot,' on Saturday last, that your dear father, my lamented and highly esteemed friend, had so suddenly ceased from his labours, and so peacefully entered upon his rest. It is now some years since I last saw him; but the lapse of time does not destroy affection, or warrant the non-expression of sympathy with you in the great loss you have sustained.

"I remember your father in Manchester, when you and your sister were led by his fatherly hand to the great Sunday-school gatherings at Whitsuntide, and I can almost hear his voice, when, with a stick and white handkerchief, he led the singing as few else could have done. I remember him when at Southmolton, his recognition service, your sister's removal. I remember him in Devonport and other places, where we met as brethren meet. Earth has one friend less for me. I have one more in heaven. I not only respected but loved your revered father; he had many excellencies; he was a firm friend, a faithful one too, and an affectionate one as well. The real, the sterling value of his character some might not perceive; but those who knew him wanted no proof of his having a warm heart, unshaken integrity, and a kind and friendly spirit.

"I am glad that his end was so peaceful and quiet; perhaps it was just what he wished. I should not be surprised if you find among his more private papers an expression of his own wish, which has been granted. His life was in the bustle and excitement of the church and the world, his death has been in the privacy and silence of the study. He has fallen asleep in the place where he thought of God, of Christ, and heaven. I hope that you will derive comfort and support in your affliction, from the fact that you were spared to him, to cheer and minister to him in absence of others. It might have been otherwise. Dear brother Pyer is at rest, at home in the heaven of *Wycliffe*, in the presence of Jesus, and of a goodly company of spirits who were his joy and crown of rejoicing. Excuse my writing you, it is not to increase your sorrow, but your submission to your heavenly Father's will. I could not do less, though time and distance have long separated me from your dear father; but he was once in this land, now he is in the better, in the heavenly Fatherland. I had long known him, I shall not soon forget him. May the God of your Father, your own God, comfort you in your deep sorrow, and sanctify this affliction to you, and the Christian friends who have been deprived of a good minister of Jesus Christ, is the fervent wish,

"Of yours most affectionately,
"JOHN EDWARDS."

"10, ST. MARY'S ROAD, CANONBURY, *April* 18, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—The intimation of your father's death was quite startling to me, and I felt at once how great and irreparable would be your loss. My intercourse with him although limited, was sufficient to give me much more than a mere public interest in him. I saw him when at Devonport under circumstances that elicited all that was genial, and brotherly, and Christian in him. All my recollections of him are pleasant, and such as to invest his memory with a very high esteem.

"Most deeply do I sympathize with you in your loss, and pray that the 'Father of the fatherless' will direct your path, and shelter your head. We often prove God's nearness and love the most in our greatest sorrows. You will, I trust, realize all the comfort that He, the God of comfort, can give. If you come to town, I shall be very glad to see you.

"I am, my dear Miss Pyer,
"With much sympathy, very cordially yours,
"HENRY ALLON."

"COTHAM, BRISTOL, *April* 18, 1859.

MY DEAR MISS PYER,—I must not let this time of sorrow pass over you, without sending a line to assure you of my deep sympathy with you. I have a great respect for the memory of your dear father, and I heard of his sudden removal with pain and regret. It is a satisfaction to me now, that I came to Devonport nearly two years ago, and still more that I saw a good deal of him some five months since, when he visited this city, and preached twice at my chapel.

"It would have been a satisfaction to you to have served him in declining days, but better it is that he should have no declining days. You have no remembrance of physical humiliation, and you are free from all doubt respecting his preparation for the sudden summons. May God's Holy Spirit comfort you, my dear friend! May we meet him for whom we sorrow again! This would be his deepest wish now, that we would look forward to, and make sure of, the reunion.

"Believe me, my dear Miss Pyer,
"Yours very truly,
"DAVID THOMAS."

"LONDON, *April* 20, 1849.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I was entirely unprepared for the awful intelligence which the funeral card imparted to me. Little did I think that I should no more see the face of a man, whose face I *always* saw with great and unmixed pleasure. Mr. Pyer was indeed very dear to me, and much esteemed in my family. My beloved and now departed wife entertained for him a regard superior, I believe, to that of any other provincial minister. I greatly wish I were not so far from you, as I would long since have seen you, to blend my sympathies with yours. All the past times rush before my mind with irrepressible tenderness. My first sojourn in your happy home with you and your father; our walks and our talkings; our voyage to the breakwater; with the sweet songs sung by you and him, our journey through Mount Edgecumbe, and a great deal besides—all come back with the freshness of yesterday. But I must stop, for I am greatly pressed; yet I could no longer forbear sending this very imperfect note.

"Dear girl, you are now alone, and yet you are *not* alone, the Father of all is with you! May He strengthen, comfort, preserve you, and be your everlasting friend! Kindest sympathy from my daughters, as well as from myself, from your own and your father's friend,

"JOHN CAMPBELL."

"CROYDON, *May* 11, 1859.

"MY DEAR MISS PYER,—I should be very grieved for you to infer from my silence, that I have not been one among the many who sympathize with you in your heavy bereavement. Believe me, when I received the intelligence of the stroke which left you to mourn such an irreparable loss, I felt that I was thereby deprived of one of my oldest and most valued friends. . . . . I need not say to you, dear Miss Pyer, how much we loved and respected your honoured father. For counsel, and sympathy, and manifold other tokens of friendship, I have long felt myself indebted to him; and *now* he rests from his labours. I bless God for the grace manifested in, as well as by him. Long will he live in the hallowed remembrance of many. Though removed from us, he will yet speak to us in the recollection of his holy life, zealous labours, and bright example. His faith may we follow!

"I feel that human sympathy at such a season as this is, in one sense, of little efficacy, and yet to withhold it would be to keep pent up the true emotions of sorrowing hearts. Earth's losses are heaven's gains. Heaven's attractions are continually increasing, and you have treasure there which you had not a brief season ago. May the chasm which death has occasioned, be filled up by the presence and blessing of the loving Jesus; and while you weep, you will, I know, do so with chastened feelings. Your honoured and now sainted parent has reached the land where there is no Baca; and as you journey on toward it, looking upward, you can sing—

'There my *best* friends, my kindred, dwell;
There God, my Saviour, reigns.'

"Mrs. Steer unites with me in the expression of our sincere regard and sympathy, and in every good wish that you may be enriched with all you need, and have every other gift crowned with all 'spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.'

"Commending you to God, and the word of his grace,
"Believe me, dear Miss Pyer,
"Yours affectionately,
"JOSEPH STEER."

THE END.

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